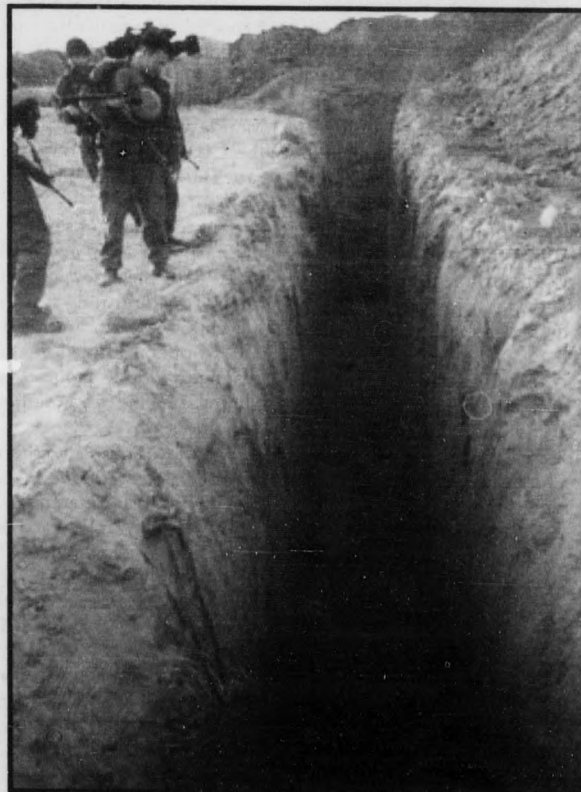


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The pair, who hardly knew each other before Katie offered to donate a kidney, have become like sisters and hope that more people will consider live donor transplants as a life-saving option, particularly for those in kidney failure. Photo by Paula Kaminsky Davis



The PA has announced plans to make the suspects part of the security forces provided they give up their own weapons and sign promises that they will not again attack Israelis. There were reports that the PA claimed to have disarmed 110 people.

# Something for Everyone

## BJE to host educators' Holocaust seminar May 22

By SHOSHANA HARPER

The Bureau of Jewish Education will present a Jewish Educators' Holocaust Seminar on Sunday, May 22, from 12:30-4:30 p.m. in the Domont Auditorium of the BJE. Teachers and non-teachers alike are welcome.

Eva Hamlet, a Holocaust survivor and member of Indianapolis Hebrew Congregation, will begin the seminar by discussing her experiences as part of the Kindertransport, which sent nearly 10,000 children to Great Britain from Nazi Germany, Austria, Czechoslovakia, and Poland in the nine months prior to World War II.

Rabbi Dennis Sasso of Congregation Beth-El Zedeck will show the video "The Longest Hatred" and lead a discussion. The video traces the development of antisemitism from the beginnings of Christianity to the Holocaust and shows how religious teaching and history have conspired against the Jews.

Rabbi Arnold Bienstock of Congregation Shaarey Tefilla will discuss "Spiritual Resistance to the Holocaust," examining narratives of Jewish individuals and groups who confronted the evil of the Holocaust, whether in a classical religious style or a cultural, humanistic mode.

The event will conclude with a presentation by Ellen McNutt, who specializes in Holocaust education at Congregation Beth-El Zedeck. As we move into the "post-Holocaust" era, how will we educate young people about the severity of the Holocaust and its relationship to events occurring today?

This event is free and open to the public. For more information, contact Tracy at 255-3124, ext. 706.

### JCC art exhibit

Sofiya Inger's acrylic works will be on display at the JCC Art Gallery from May 15-June 15. Join her for an opening reception on Sunday, May 15, from 2-4 p.m.

Inger studied fine art at the Kirov School of Art in Russia and at the Fashion Institute of Technology in New York.

### BEZ Friday night live

On May 20 and June 3 at 6 p.m. enjoy an upbeat and unique Friday evening service at Congregation Beth-El Zedeck, complete with music, spirit, and lots of *ruach*!

### Crazy for canines

The next meeting of this group, co-sponsored by the JCC and the Humane Society of Indianapolis, will take place on Saturday, May 21, from 6:30-8:30 p.m. with a "Pooch Romp" at the Humane

Society, 7929 N. Michigan Rd.

The cost is \$10 for you and your pet. The pups will enjoy the "bark park" while the adults enjoy refreshments. For more info call Marsha Landau, 251-9467, ext. 233.

### 4th grade art

The Federation sponsored a program called "Pieces of Our Community" in which 4th graders from the synagogues in the community were invited to create drawings about what being Jewish in Indianapolis means to them.

These drawings are currently displayed at the JCC through April. A "winning" piece will be selected as the invitation design to the community-wide carnival held on June 5.

This program was sponsored by the Jewish Federation through Project COMMUNITY - a new partnership between the Jewish Federation and Indianapolis synagogues.

### Clinton at BEZ

Congregation Beth-El Zedeck will host President Bill Clinton on Wednesday, June 8. His talk will focus on "Peace and Social Justice in the post-9/11 World."

The program is sponsored by the Smulyan Memorial Lecture Series and the Max Simon Charitable Foundation.

Tickets are \$50 for open seating on a first-come basis,

\$200 for reserved seats, and \$500 for reserved seats plus the opportunity to take part in a special reception for President Clinton.

Call the synagogue office for details: 253-3441.

### Shane Golf Outing

On Thursday, June 9, the ninth annual golf tournament in memory of Shelley Shane will be held at the Broadmoor Country Club. Profits benefit JCC scholarships for kids.

There is a lot to offer here for golfers. In addition to golf opportunities there are raffles to win a golf vacation at Pebble Beach. If you have not yet received your information in the mail, contact the JCC at 251-9467.

### GUCCI Camp K'ton

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K'ton is a small group experience where each camper receives personal attention. Brochures are available from the camp, 317-873-3361, or the IHC office, 317-255-6647.

### Summer Torah study

The Ivy League Torah Study Program offers students the opportunity to explore the contemporary relevance of Torah study and Jewish observance. With an excellent program and staff, no wonder it's the highest ranked in the Western hemisphere.

Admission is selective, and a fellowship of \$1,800 is awarded. Check it out at: [www.iltsp.org](http://www.iltsp.org), or you can call Chavie at 718-735-0220 or e-mail [cantorlev@aol.com](mailto:cantorlev@aol.com).

### Older adult activities

The JCC Older Adult Services Department has added a couple of new programs. Do take advantage!

The Open Artists Studio encourages adults to come to the JCC with their friends and art supplies to the JCC Art Room in the Youth Wing every Tuesday from 9-Noon. The cost is \$2 each visit.

The Libby Fogle Golden Age Club continues to thrive with its weekly Relaxation and Meditation Group on Tuesdays at 11 a.m. followed by a luncheon at 11:30. Lunch is also held on Thursdays of every week.

If you have questions about any activities for adults over 65, call Julie Sondhelm, 251-9467, ext. 250.

### Chavurah Shabbatot

The group Simcha is a "Chavurah group of friends and family who gather to discover and rejoice in Jewish spirituality and mysticism."

Shabbat gatherings will take place on the third Friday of each month at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Indianapolis, 615 W. 43rd St. Candle lighting begins at 6 p.m.

Following services is a pot-luck dinner.

For more information about the group contact Leslie, 317-566-8863, or [LAKFlowers@aol.com](mailto:LAKFlowers@aol.com).

### Kabbalah classes

Riki Rose teaches a practical and applicable approach to mystical Judaism on the first Sunday of the month at Congregation Shaarey Tefilla from 3:30-5 p.m. Babysitting is available for a nominal fee. 253-4591.

### Israeli folk dance

Love the music? Love the dance? Come learn the steps and join in the fun.

For all ages, this is an ongoing drop-in class that meets Mondays from 7:30-9 p.m. at the JCC. Partners are not necessary. The cost is \$2 for members, \$2.50 for non-members.

### Meditation for seniors

Learn relaxation and meditation with Gary Koppel every other Tuesday at 11 a.m. in the Laikin Auditorium of the JCC. Koppel is trained in various meditation techniques, including TM, the Silva Method, and others.

For more info call Julie at 251-9467, ext. 250.

### Jewish War Veterans

The Jewish War Veteran Post 114 welcomes fellow veterans to their monthly meetings on the third Thursday of each month. Meetings are held at the JCC, 7:30 p.m.

For more information contact Michael Gelfand, commander, 253-7982, or Stanley Greissman, adjutant, 843-0742.

### Introduction to Judaism

Continued on page 5

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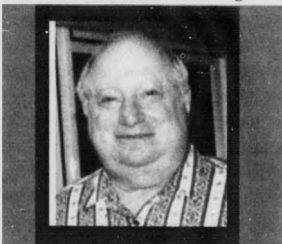
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## Critics Corner

### 'The Plot against Harry'

By CHARLES EPSTEIN

First let me thank Ed Stattmann for his marvelous guest



review of the film "Partisans of Vilna." As you know, due to my recent illness, I cannot cover everything. The majesty of Ed's writing makes me want to see "Partisans of Vilna."

It is his opinion and mine also, after reading his review, that this film is a "necessary" film.

Now on to something not so "necessary."

The DVD of "The Plot against Harry" is now available. Judged a failure over 20 years ago, this black-and-white comedy was presumed lost. In 1989 the film resurfaced, triumphantly garnering many awards, and became a sort of cult classic.

I wouldn't classify "The Plot against Harry" as a must-see film or a jewel amidst many gems. It is more a diamond chip of entertainment. The story concerns the rise and fall of Harry Plotnik, a once-notorious New York Jewish gangster who finds his numbers racket slipping away after his release from prison.

Harry makes an erratic effort to go straight, under

pressure from well-meaning relatives. This triggers a series of humiliations and petty disasters. Harry finds it extremely difficult to fit in with either the criminal world or the respectable world. This is the comedic theme that underscores Harry's dilemma.

The beauty of this film is that none of the performers are Screen Actors Guild members. Made on a skimpy budget, this film was written and directed by Michael Roemer as a spectacle of the late 1950s.

It is occasionally funny and engrossing but not overly impressive. However, it is different, and that is its attractiveness. There is a scene early in the film that takes place in a dog obedience school that I thought was hilarious.

Harry is performed by Martin Priest with a uniquely tender portrayal of a washed up organized crime boss. Harry is not as smart or talented as he thinks he is.

Lots of non-union Jewish actors are sprinkled throughout the work – but a "Godfather" or "Goodfellas" this film is not. Nor is it supposed to be. This is a small film that affords a pleasant diversion from the spectacles the film industry now offers. There are no special effects that I noticed, and it is simply photographed by Robert Young.

I have to admit that "The Plot against Harry" was a delightful departure from the heavy Holocaust films begging to be reviewed. The film is in English with Spanish and Yiddish thrown in.

## Hadassah thanks donors with fun, fashion

The Indianapolis Chapter of Hadassah will thank donors who have contributed at least \$100 at a gala luncheon buffet to be held at noon on May 22 at Athens on 86th Street (just east of O'Malia's).

Participants will be entertained with fun and fashions, as Red Ella presents a show of contemporary fashions.

Indianapolis author and humorist Dick Wolsie will aim at amusing guests with a program of Jewish humor.

Lunch cover is \$25. For more information or to make a reservation, call Hadassah House at 569-9870.

Hadassah's projects in the United States include a major health education and advocacy program, voter registration, the Hadassah Youth Movement Book Club, and many educational activities.

In Israel Hadassah is a "bridge to peace" with its world-renowned non-sectarian Hadassah Medical Organiza-

tion, support of Youth Aliyah, Hadassah College, and its alliance with the Jewish National Fund.

## Suzuki & Friends celebrates 25th

The International Violin Competition of Indianapolis will presents the 25th Anniversary Celebration concert of Suzuki & Friends on Tuesday, May 24, at 7:30 p.m. at the Indiana History Center's Basile Theater.

The gala will feature Hidetaro Suzuki on the podium conducting the Suzuki & Friends Chamber Orchestra with several soloists from the Indianapolis music community.

Soloists for the concert

include pianist Zeyda Ruga Suzuki; violinists Jennifer Greenlee, Jayna Park, Dinah Montgomery, and Deborah Rodin; harpist Wendy Muston, and flutist Karen Moratz.

The repertoire will include Vivaldi's Concerto for Four Violins, Mozart's Concerto for Flute and Harp, and Beethoven's Second Piano Concerto.

For tickets and information call the IVCI offices at 317-637-4574.

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# Israel Day celebrations were festive, contemplative

Yekutiel Gershoni at CBT

By SHOSHANA HARPER

On Thursday, May 12, Congregation B'nai Torah hosted a Yom Haatzma'ut ceremony featuring Professor Yekutiel Gershoni on "The War of Attrition to the War after the War - a Personal Story."

The focus of Gershoni's talk was the personal war he faced after being maimed as he attempted to defuse a bomb. In an instant his life changed, after the last of four charges on a bomb he was trying to defuse blew up on him. He lost his sight and his arms.

He happened to be the officer on duty, and this was part of his job. He was stationed in the Jordan Valley following his return to service after his son's *brit milah*.

His talk focused on his rehabilitation over the years and the support of his family and friends.

Gershoni is currently living in and doing research in Bloomington.

The events of the evening continued with a film on Israel,



Sandy Koenig at CST

the singing of "Hatikvah," and the annual barbecue hosted by Rabbi and Yaffa Crandall.

## BJE celebration

Poetry, dancing, and contemplation were all part of the May 10 Israel Day event at the BJE, hosted by the Indianapolis



Dancers at BJE

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lis Israeli contingent. The dance troupe's theme dealt with picking up where someone else left off.

## CST celebration

Several of the parents accompanying the HHAI eighth graders spoke at Congregation Shaarey Tefilla on Friday, May 13, prior to erev Shabbat services, about their experience as chaperones on the annual Israel trip.

In addition to Sandy Koenig, whose son Adam is an eighth grader, Erv Herman and Barbara Irwin Herman, parents of Molly, also accompanied the group. They had numerous picture boards and a power point presentation about the highlights of their trip, including a visit to a school with whom the HHAI students have been corresponding for a couple of years.

Photos by David Harper

## Harper

Continued from page 2

Rabbi Arnold Bienstock is leading the Introduction to Judaism class at Congregation Shaarey Tefilla on Tuesdays at 2:30 p.m. The class is currently focusing on Hebrew reading. If you are interested in joining the class, contact Rabbi Bienstock at 253-4591.

### Adult ed at CBT

Congregation B'nai Torah offers classes daily. Sunday, 8:30 p.m., Tractate Brochos with Rabbi Hasten; Monday, 8 a.m., Intro to Gemora with Rabbi Schusterman, 8 p.m., Women's Parsha Class with Fraidel Schusterman; Tuesday, 10 a.m., Strive for Truth with Rabbi Crandall, 8 p.m., Partners in Torah with Rabbi Avi Grossbaum; Wednesday, 7 p.m., Kashrus with Rabbi Gold, 8 p.m., Women's Te'hilim; Thursday, noon, Bereshis with Rabbi Crandall, 8 p.m., Tractate Brochos with Rabbi Hasten; Shabbat classes: Saturday, 8:15 a.m., Parsha Hashavua; 10:45 a.m., Beginner's Service. 253-5253.

### Parents' night out

Need a night out without the kids and can never find a sitter?

The JCC has found a way for you to have it with its Saturday night "Parents' Night Out" program. Children love Saturday nights at the JCC because they can count on an evening of special activities, movies, swimming, snacks, and dinner. Bring a pillow, swimsuit, and towel.

The price of a session is \$20 for members or \$30 for non-members, or members may purchase a 6- or 12-session punch card for \$110 or \$200, respectively. Reservations are preferred. For more information call 251-9467, ext. 282. This activity is for ages 3 and up (no diapers).

## HHAI will honor Schildcrout, Fellegy

The Hasten Hebrew Academy of Indianapolis will honor Terry Schildcrout with its Distinguished Service Award and MaryEllen Fellegy with its Distinguished Teacher Award at the 34th anniversary HAI-Life Awards Dinner on Sunday, May 22, at the Cultural Arts Center at HHA.

The theme of the evening is "A Celebration of Arts and

## Northwest Indiana remembers

By IDELLE ROSENBLUM-KERZNER

World War II was coming to a close. General Omar Bradley of the U.S. Army was among those troops liberating the concentration camps. "The smell of death overwhelmed us. More than 3,200 naked, emaciated bodies had been flung into shallow graves. Lice crawled over the yellowed skin of their sharp bony bodies," Bradley would report.

Like many soldiers, Bradley believed he was setting free those tortured by the Nazis; however, not so. Sixty years later, survivors like Sol Goldstein of Munster admit that past horrors still chase them.

"They will never leave me alone," Goldstein said. While at Auschwitz Goldstein thought, "I'll never make it until tomorrow." But by some miracle Goldstein did live, and so did his memories.

"They gave you just enough food to survive," said Goldstein, who remembered getting a piece of cheese filled with worms but eating it anyway.

As the years pass, survivors like Goldstein become few. Individuals like Munster's Mickey Sparber, head of the Jewish Community Relations Council, an arm of the Northwest Indiana Jewish Federation, has no intention of letting those who suffered at the hands of the Nazis be forgotten.

Believing that silence and indifference are the biggest enemies to any society seeking tolerance, Sparber and his committee brought the Holocaust pictorial exhibit "Lest We Forget" to Munster's Center for Visual and Performing Arts. Three thousand visitors

attended and were moved by the explicit photographs displayed and by the Holocaust survivors who told them of their horrific experiences.

Sparber asks, "Why are we here 60 years later talking about bigotry and hatred?" He wonders why society has not heeded the lessons of the Holocaust. "This is what happens when extremists prevail."

Maryann Pancheri's eighth grade English class had just finished the book *The Diary of Anne Frank*. Students arrived thinking they would be looking at pictures, but they were mistaken. Valparaiso resident and museum docent Joanna Bloom took a stick and ordered the teens to form two lines. Some were sent to death because they were too short or too sick to work.

One youngster hopefully said, "I am a teacher," when asked his profession. "Your purpose is to please me, you scum of the earth," shouted Bloom, who then said, "Teachers are dangerous; you can give people ideas."

Another student yelled, "I am a doctor!" Bloom, smirking, sent the "physician" off to death while shouting, "I have a lot of fields to work; I have no need for doctors."

Pancheri admitted her students were terrified during this exercise but for certain learned from the experience.

Even though April is Holocaust Remembrance Month, Sparber plans to organize an exhibit that can be taken to schools all year round. "The worst thing that could happen is if we tore the museum down and forgot about it," Sparber said.

Purdue's chair of history and political science, Saul Lerner, will be teaching a three-credit course from June 13-26 for teachers and community leaders who wish to include Holocaust education in their curriculum. Lerner can be reached at 765-989-2329.

Idelle Rosenbloom-Kerzner graduated from Indiana University with a degree in education. She presently is studying for her science endorsement. She is a freelance writer, a columnist for the *Post Tribune*, and a reporter for the *Calumet Press* and *IUN Phoenix*. Hubby Irwin and three children, Melissa, Shellie, and Jared, describe her as a nagging Jewish mother who constantly worries.

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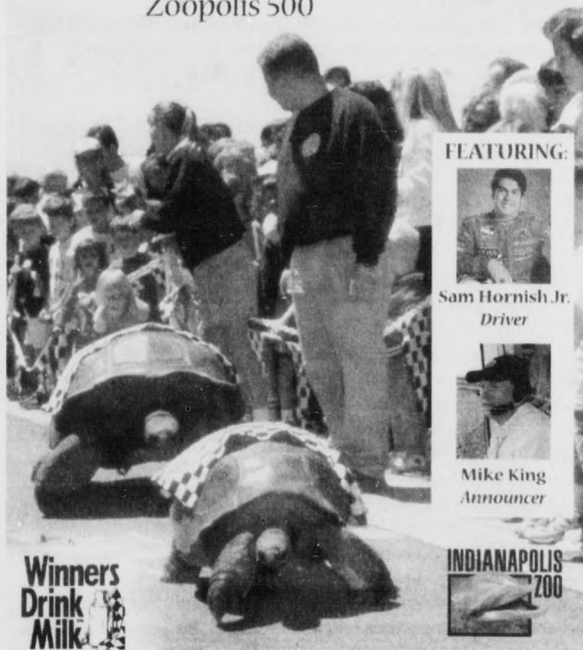
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## Jewish Post & Opinion

### Independence Day means pride, hope

By RABBI JON ADLAND

The 5th of Iyar is the Hebrew date for Israel Independence Day. (When the 5th of Iyar falls on Shabbat, Israel Independence Day is celebrated a day or two earlier so as not to conflict with Shabbat.)

We celebrate Israel's Independence Day with song, story, and special words. It is not a time for fireworks, but it is a time to celebrate.

Despite the complicated political realities of Israel's existence, every Jew should feel pride for what this once remnant of Jews, survivors of the Holocaust, refugees from Arab lands, immigrants from around the world, and even families with deep generational roots in the land did with almost nothing.

For the members of my family who went to Israel, they did so after learning that most of their family members were murdered in the Holocaust. This land provided a new opportunity for their survival and Jewish survival.

I have traveled to Israel six times and look forward to my next trip in the spring of 2006. Twice I lived in Israel for a year. The first time was during my junior year of college, and the second time was during my first year of rabbinical school.

My wife, Sandy, has gone three times with me. Joshua, my son, spent a semester of high school in Israel on NFTY's EIE High School in Israel program, and Rachel, my daughter, will do the same in the spring of 2006. Joshua also plans to spend a semester of his junior year of college there.

This summer five children from our congregation will be going to Israel on NFTY's L'dor v'dor Israel Experience. They will go first to Prague and Poland and then on to Israel.

Each Israel trip, each experience in this special land, whether in high school, college, or as an adult, is filled with opportunities to learn and to grow. I certainly urge everyone to find a time to go, and I most certainly urge families to invest in their children's future by getting them on a high school Israel trip. It will help establish a Jewish identity and a connection with a Jewish yesterday, today, and tomorrow.

Of course there are political realities connected with Israel. Since 1967, when Israel successfully defended herself against six Arab nation armies, capturing the areas that became known as the West Bank, Gaza, and Sinai, Israel has struggled. For some Jews this was manifest destiny. For other Jews, ruling over others was a necessary, but temporary, evil.

Today there is no question in my mind that a viable two-state solution is the only answer. If we don't divide the land, then eventually the Arabs will outnumber us, and either we will be in an apartheid situation, or we will lose power.

The disengagement and pullout from Gaza is first. Dismantling the communities and leaving the West Bank is second. Somewhere in there we need to sign a peace agreement.

Finally, the issue of Jerusalem must be settled. There has been too much bloodshed, too many lives lost, too many families destroyed, too many angers ignored, too many promises broken, and too much distrust heightened.

I believe that the Palestinian Arab community and the Israeli Jewish community can live side by side in peace and mutual cooperation.

The situation, or, in Hebrew, *matzav*, must not keep us away from visiting our land. I last went there in December 2001. There were 21 people who went with me, braving the complicated world that began on 9-11. We had a great time, but for those of us who had been there, we saw the emptiness of the usually busy markets, hotels, restaurants, tourist sites, and more.

Israelis who met us embraced us for our courage in traveling to Israel at such a difficult time. It hurt me to see people suffer, people who depended on us coming to see this beautiful land. I hear that things are changing, but the scar of these last several years will take time to heal.

Some of you will not agree with my political analysis. Some people do not want to return an inch of land that was given by God to the Jews in the Bible. Others will be even more dovish than I. Some Jews feel no connection to this Jewish state and have no interest in ever going there.

This is what makes us Jews. We don't all agree, but I have to believe that, except for only a few Jews somewhere, we acknowledge

## Editorial

All of the wonderful tribute ads and messages that we have received have left me with the feeling of being held in a divine embrace. Thanks so very much to all of you who have contributed.

This outpouring of praise makes me think that the special issue for the 75th anniversary of the newspaper and the transfer from a for-profit business to a nonprofit organization must be a good choice.

As we have been looking through the bound volumes from the last 75 years, there have been many occasions where my father has paid tribute to others. Some of those were after the person had passed away. It is nice to see that others are paying tribute to him while he is alive to appreciate it.

Having said that, I cannot help but recall a story, a Chasidic tale, possibly by Reb Nachman of Bratzlov. It is about an exchange between him and a student of his I will call Yossi.

Yossi has been studying with the rebbe for many years, and the time to end the daily studies is fast approaching. In the last year Yossi has been closely watching the rebbe. Yossi thinks he has learned about everything he needs to know.

Twice a year all the students have a private audience with the rebbe, similar to a

counseling session. When it is Yossi's turn, Yossi asks the rebbe, "Do you I think I am close to achieving enlightenment?"

As is customary in Judaism, the rebbe answers the question with a question. "Tell me young one, how do feel when others criticize you?"

Yossi answers, "I do not let it affect me one way or the other. I listen to what the person is telling me and examine my actions. If I believe that person is accurate, I strive to improve. If I think he is incorrect, I let it go. Either way I thank the person for his interest in my welfare."

The rebbe answers, "Good." Then he asks, "And how do feel when others compliment you?"

"It makes me feel very good," the student exclaims.

"You are not close to enlightenment," the rebbe replies. "When you can respond to a compliment the same way you do a criticism, without it affecting how you think about yourself, then you will be well on your way to enlightenment."

Well, my dear readers, according to this story, almost all of us are still students with a lot more to learn. Who can hear a compliment and not feel good? I, for one, am far from achieving enlightenment, because the tributes have left me feeling great!

Jennie Cohen

that the existence of Israel is a good thing for the Jewish community. Too many years of persecution while living as guests in other people's homes determined the need for a Jewish homeland, and without question this small piece of earth was the place for it to be.

I've loved my time in Israel. Each experience was different, but exciting. I hope that each of you will go and experience this incredible place.

As you light your Shabbat candles this

week, light one for the 57th anniversary of Israel's Independence. May this light continue to shine on. Light the other for all those who fought to make Israel a reality, whether on the battlefield, through education, in politics, whatever. We are in debt to each and every person.

*Am Yisrael Chai!* The people of Israel live and we live with *hatikvah* – the hope.

Rabbi Adland is senior rabbi of Indianapolis Hebrew Congregation.

# A new era is here!

# The Jewish Post & Opinion

O N L I N E

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## Stop by today.

## Predictable occurs at Berlin memorial

BERLIN—A vandal made his nasty mark with a swastika at Germany's new national Holocaust memorial within hours after it opened to the public.

Designer Peter Eisenman had predicted there would be such graffiti and said he was not sure if such graffiti enhanced or detracted from his work.

Security guards who spotted the small swastika quickly removed it. They didn't catch the vandal, likely the first of many defacers of the stele—2,711 gray concrete slabs.

Ahead of its opening, Eisenman said he wouldn't mind skateboarders, children playing hide and seek, or even graffiti on the slabs.

## Fighting heats up near Lebanon border

Israel and Hezbollah have traded attacks across the Israel-Lebanon border in the past week.

Israeli planes, helicopter gunships, and tanks destroyed Hezbollah posts in Lebanon in response to Hezbollah's shelling of IDF positions.

No Israeli soldiers were wounded during the fighting. The number of Hezbollah casualties was not known.

Prime Minister Sharon said Israel would not open a north-

ern front and had no wish to escalate the belligerency there, but media quoted a military officer involved as saying Israel would retaliate more sharply if necessary.

Hezbollah mortar fire from Lebanon threatened Israelis three times within a two-day period.

A Katyusha rocket from Lebanon struck a bakery, causing extensive damage but no casualties. Two other rockets landed in an open area.

## New pope to visit synagogue in Germany

VATICAN CITY—Pope Benedict XVI has made it known he plans to visit the main synagogue in Cologne, Germany, in August.

He will be the second pontiff in history to visit a Jewish place of worship.

Ambassador Oded Ben-Hur, of Israel, said the pope told him of his intention following an audience with diplomats assigned to the

Vatican.

Pope John Paul II, Benedict's predecessor, was the first to make such a visit when he went to Rome's synagogue in 1986.

One of Benedict's first acts in office was to invite Rome's chief rabbi to his April 24 installation mass where, in his homily, the new pope said Catholics had "a great shared spiritual heritage" with Jews.

## Washington State reforms travel life insurance law

SEATTLE—Area Jewish organizations are lauding the enactment of a law that forbids discrimination in sales of life insurance.

The Jewish Federation of Greater Seattle and the Pacific Northwest Regional Anti-Defamation League said the new law means people will no longer be denied the ability to buy life insurance before traveling to Israel, as they have been in the past.

The new law prevents insurance companies from discriminating against travelers for lawful travel by canceling or denying travelers life insurance because of that past travel or current lawful travel.

"This issue is of particular concern to the Washington State Jewish community because nearly all major life insurance providers have denied life insurance coverage to travelers simply because those travelers traveled or planned to travel to Israel," said Nancy Geiger, chief financial officer of the federation. "I personally was denied coverage last year because I was traveling to Israel, as were several of my colleagues," she said.

The Jewish groups said disincentives to travel to Israel also harmed plans for Christians and Muslims wishing to go to the Holy Land.

New York and Illinois have enacted similar laws.

## Ellsberg at UN conference: 'Vanunu merits Nobel Prize'

UNITED NATIONS—"Watergate papers" discloser Daniel Ellsberg says Israeli Mordechai Vanunu should be given the Nobel Peace Prize for revealing Israel's nuclear arsenal and should be free to travel and promote the abolition of nuclear weapons.

Ellsberg said he agrees with Joseph Rotblat, winner of the 1995 Nobel Peace Prize, who he said has frequently recommended that Vanunu be given the prize as well.

Ellsberg's disclosure of Pentagon secrets about the Vietnam War helped the 1970s anti-war movement.

He urged delegates from 188 countries attending a conference here on the Nuclear Non-

proliferation Treaty to strongly protest Israel's restrictions on Vanunu's speech and travel and Israel's threats to return him to prison, where he spent 18 years for telling a British newspaper about the nuclear plant in Dimona, Israel, where he had been a technician.

Israel has forbidden him to leave its borders until at least April 2006 and put him on trial last month on a charge of violating a condition of his release by having contact with foreigners.

Ellsberg said he recently spent five days with Vanunu. He called the government's claim that Vanunu knows secrets that endanger its security "absurd."

"The fact is more Vanunus are urgently needed in this world," Ellsberg said.

He said that in the early 1960s he was privy to Pentagon information about nuclear weapons and nuclear war plans and should have told America and the world "the insanity and moral obscenity of our war planning, which remains the same today."

"I regret profoundly that I did not reveal that fact publicly, with documents," he said.

He spoke on behalf of the non-profit Nuclear Age Peace Foundation.

Israel neither acknowledges nor denies having a nuclear weapons program.

## Professor, 2 others face terrorism trial

TAMPA, Fla.—A New Jersey father hopes his testimony here will help send to prison a professor accused of helping to finance terrorism in Israel that killed the daughter of the witness 10 years ago.

American student Alisa Flatow was killed when a terrorist in a van loaded with explosives rammed the bus she was riding.

She and seven Israelis were killed in the blast on the April 9, 1995, terrorist attack.

Sami Al-Arian, a University

of South Florida professor and nationally known Palestinian rights activist, faces trial along with three others in a 53-count indictment of racketeering, conspiracy, and providing material support to terrorists. Five other men have been indicted but are still at large.

The men could face life in prison if convicted of charges they used Al-Arian's think tank and charity as fund-raising fronts for the Palestinian Islamic Jihad.

Flatow's father, Stephen

Flatow, of West Orange, N.J., intends to testify that their alleged conspiracy killed his daughter. According to news media here, he said he was not told until 2003 that agents believed there was a connection between Al-Arian and the bombing that killed his daughter.

When he was told, he said, he was glad that our government was finally standing up for Americans whom other Americans kill through crimes abroad.

## Thousands turn out for Gush Katif rally

GUSH KATIF, Israel—Thousands of Israelis held Israel Independence Day rallies at Gush Katif last week, protesting a planned pullout from Gaza in August.

The Gaza citizens and their supporters vowed to hold onto their homes in the area Israel made its own in the 1967 Middle East war.

Some Israelis dressed in the national blue and white of Israel's flag, while others wore orange, which has come to symbolize their rejection of Prime Minister Sharon's plan to withdraw from all 21 Gaza communities.

Tens of thousands turned out for the Gaza protest, and around 1,500 marched in the northern West Bank, where four of 120 communities are targeted for the pullout.

In Jerusalem several protesters heckled Sharon during an

international Bible quiz contest in Jerusalem with shouts of "Jews don't expel other Jews" as he tried to speak.

Palestinians welcome

the pullout but have called Sharon's plan a ruse to tighten Israel's hold on much of the West Bank, which they want with Gaza for their own state.



COLLABORATIVE EFFORT—Twelve Magen David Adom ambulances and three Palestinian Red Crescent Society ambulances transferred the bodies of 15 Palestinian terrorists from the Abu Kabir Forensic Institute in Jaffa to the Erez Junction.

# Obituaries

## Stan Levey, 79; bebop drummer

VAN NUYS, Calif.—Bebop drummer Stan Levey, of Sherman Oaks, Calif., has died at the age of 79.

Mr. Levey added his rhythmic skills to the music of Peggy Lee, Ella Fitzgerald, Bobby Darin, Benny Goodman, Woody Herman, and Stan Kenton.

He gained his bebop stature working with Charlie Parker and Dizzy Gillespie.

The son of a prizefight promoter, he took up boxing and

the drums, but decided drumming was his real calling.

He was in great demand for studio recording, and his drumming and composing added also to the soundtracks of hundreds of movies and television shows.

In later life he made a successful career as a commercial photographer — so successful that many of his friends were unaware of his musical career.

## Benjamin Mordecai, 60; Broadway producer

NEW HAVEN, Conn.—Benjamin Mordecai, a Broadway producer who formerly headed the Yale Repertory Theater, has died at the age of 60.

He had been general manager and former managing director of the Yale Repertory Theater and was associate dean and chair of the Yale School of Drama's department of theater management.

He is represented on Broadway this season by "Brooklyn, the Musical."

As one of the producers of "Fences" and Tony Kushner's two-part "Angels in America," Mr. Mordecai won three Tonys.

Early in his career, Mr. Mordecai founded the Indiana Repertory Theater in Indianapolis, where he was the producing director for 11 years.

## Robert Slutzky, 75; artist, educator

ABINGTON, Pa.—Robert Slutzky, of Elkins Park, Pa., who was credited with influencing innumerable postwar architects, has died at the age

of 75.

Mr. Slutzky was a painter, writer, and educator.

He taught for many years as a professor of art and architecture at the Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art in New York. At his death he was a professor of fine arts at the University of Pennsylvania.

He was a coauthor of *Transparency: Literal and Phenomenal*, a pair of influential essays on the relationship of architecture to modern art.

He collaborated with widely-known contemporary architects, including John Hejduk, Richard Meier, and Peter Eisenman.

He painted geometrical abstractions that won critical acclaim and are in the permanent collections of the Whitney Museum and the Philadelphia Museum of Art.



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## 35,000 expected at Israel Day concert

NEW YORK—The Israel Concert in The Park Committee, in association with the National Council of Young Israel, has announced they will host the 12th annual Israel Day Concert in Central Park, at the East Meadow, located at 97th Street and 5th Avenue, on Sunday, June 5, from 2:30-6 p.m., rain or shine.

Over 35,000 people are expected to gather at this year's event, which is dedicated to supporting the Jewish communities of Gaza, and against the surrender of Jewish territories in this region.

Speakers will include two former Cabinet members of the Israeli government and current Knesset members MK

Effie Eitam and MK Uzi Landau (of Sharon's Likud Party), a number of New York elected officials, and leaders of the American Jewish community, including rabbis and major organizational heads.

The event will feature leading Jewish performers. According to the event's organizers, the program "will be dedicated to the Jewish communities located in Judea, Samaria, and Gaza, the more than 1,300 victims of Oslo who have been murdered since the signing of the Oslo "peace" accords, the more than 700 murdered since the outbreak of the latest war against Israel, and the 57th anniversary of the State of Israel."

"As New Yorkers, we feel the need to stand up and let the world know on the 55th year of the anniversary of the founding of the State of Israel that we will not sit silent as the expulsion of Jews from any part of Israel is imminent," said Dr. Joseph Frager, event chairman.

"We will gather to rejoice at Israel's independence and to remember that Prime Minister Sharon himself spoke to this same group in Central Park a few years ago, and today his actions pose a grave danger to Israel. We will not sit silent, and we expect tens of thousands to join us to publicly say no to expulsion and yes to Jews in Gaza," Frager concluded.

## AJC acts to thwart UK boycott efforts

NEW YORK—In response to a decision by the UK Association of University Teachers (AUT) to boycott a number of Israeli universities, the American Jewish Congress and the International Academic Friends of Israel (IAFI) have announced a joint offensive to thwart efforts to isolate Israel's academic experts in the fields of medicine, medical technology, high-tech, and biotech.

The first step is a conference in Jerusalem from Sept. 18-22, gathering together U.S. and international experts to address the subject of Cardiovascular Medicine/Diabetes and Interventional Cardiology. The conference will be held in cooperation with the Israeli Atherosclerosis Society, Israeli Diabetes Society, Shaare Zedek Medical Center, and Tel Aviv University.

AJCongress President Paul S. Miller, said, "We have been working steadily against attempts to isolate Israel; her enemies are now engaged in a number of steps constituting economic warfare against the Jewish state.

"As we acted when the attempt was made to stop Caterpillar from doing business with Israel through an ill-conceived shareholder divestment drive, so are we now turning the academic boycott issue around and fighting back by hosting a series of conferences in Israel...to thwart attempts such as AUT's boycott...." Miller said.

Dr. Andrew Marks, president of IAFI and chairman

and professor of physiology and cellular biophysics at Columbia University College of Physicians & Surgeons, said, "Our goal is to support the academic community in Israel and keep the lines of communication and exchange of ideas open, and not allow this singling out of Israelis, nor allow demands not being made on anyone else, anywhere to be made on Israel.

"AJCongress is leading the efforts to defeat this latest boycott and divestment trend, not only by word alone, but through this joint endeavor

which concretely focuses attention on critical advances in Israel's universally recognized work in science and technology and the genuine threats a boycott poses to its economy and further advances in these fields of expertise," Marks continued.

*The American Jewish Congress is a membership association of Jewish Americans, organized to defend Jewish interests at home and abroad through public policy advocacy, in the courts, Congress, the executive branch, and state and local governments. It also works overseas with others who are similarly engaged.*

## Letters

**FREEDOM OF THE PRESS** — The Post and Opinion encourages readers to send letters. All letters to the editor should be addressed to The Jewish Post and Opinion, 238 S. Meridian St., Suite 502, Indianapolis, IN 46225, or by e-mail: Jpost@jewishpostandopinion.com.

Dear editor,

The recent death of Ezer Weizman, a former president of Israel, recalls the close personal and business ties he had with an American, Dan Cravitt, of Miami, Fla.

Dan had fought in World War II as a U.S. pilot, and when Israel's statehood was announced, he promptly volunteered to fly with the new state's air force, which included Weizman.

They flew Piper Cubs. They flew Piper Cubs, dropping soft drink bottles filled with flammables as improvised bombs. (I understand that at one point the air force consisted

of seven Piper Cubs, due in part to the British clamp-down on Jewish-owned arms during its mandate.)

Danny returned to Miami where he established an insurance business, but he later moved with his family to Israel, where he worked with Weizman as a business consultant, bringing American capital and acumen to the new state. When I visited him in Israel, his son was in the Israeli tank corps.

Danny died in Israel some years ago, but his impact lives on.

Dave Goodwin  
Miami Beach, Fla.

# The Art Of Observation

## And the winners are — Fun with Fulbright, Part III

By **RABBI ALLEN H. PODET**  
The F team de nouveau  
Etaoin Shrdlu — no surprise



— is to be our chair. A renowned expert in political science, Etaoin has published widely on the USSR and its successors. He is well known in foreign policy, international policy, and Near East politics. He is a full professor at a small, very prestigious college in Ohio.

Christian Cranmer is an eminent historian and a dean who has managed to command a contract whereby, as he proudly informs me, 60 percent of his time is committed to the job of administration, 20 percent to research and publication. It is an ideal setup, and no other dean in my experience has it. He is a full professor at an important university in northern Virginia, near D.C.

Frederick Redasch Frumpton is a prominent historian, best known for his work on Iraq. An Oxford Ph.D., he has become a historian of recourse on matters dealing with 19th and 20th century Near East in general, but especially with regard to Iraq. In 2004 he was called back to give the prestigious Leonard Stein Lectures at Balliol College, Oxford. He is a staff writer for the *Encyclopedia Americana*.

Allen Podet (a *nom de plume* seemed a bit transparent in my case) is a professor of religious studies at SUNY College at Buffalo, Buffalo, N.Y.

### And the winners are....

We are asked to begin by reviewing six or eight proposals superficially, merely to get a sense of what the standard is. Then we are to dig into the detailed analysis of those 20 assigned to us.

### A few selected cases:

The first one I got was one Ann Gyl. (What kind of name is that? Turkish? None of us knows.) She is an ethnomusicologist from a university in

California.

I never saw a record like this before, and I probably will not ever again. In her entire career, undergraduate and graduate, Ms. Gyl has never received a grade other than an A. In anything.

Her recommendations practically stammer, they don't know how to praise her enough. She is brilliant, productive, creative, etc. etc. etc. One must be suspicious of such a recommendation; "upper 1 percent" in everything, after all, rings alarm bells.

But it is not one recommendation: all her references, from many different professors, different times, places, subjects, agree completely. I should add, suspicious soul that I am, that they come direct to us and do not pass through her hands.

We are reasonably proficient at sorting out garbage recommendations; after all, we have written lots of recommendations ourselves. These are not of that kind: they are quite specific, describing in detail the amazing academic and intellectual feats of this young woman.

She has it in mind that popular music — the local live stuff, not internationally distributed records — not only reflects the popular mind but, to a degree, shapes it. If that is true, then what could one learn about, say, the rise and development of Jordanian nationalism — a movement of importance to Near East studies and, among others, to Israel — from meeting with contemporary musicians and analyzing the music over time?

The applicant's Arabic is perfect, absolutely fluent (by examination). Her knowledge of the area is extensive.

On a scale of zero to 100, she is clearly a 100. That is a score that we almost never give, but this is the exception.

That was an easy one.

Another case altogether is Alan Foramen of a university in Texas. Alan is an anthropologist specializing in Egyptian studies. He, too, is interested in the rise of nationalism in the Near East, but with a twist: Umm Kulthum was a famous popular singer

*Continued on page 14*

# Images of the Galilee

## T'munot HaGalil

*I've been taking photographs since I got an old Kodak Brownie at the age of five. My early passion*



*for the magical alchemy of light*

*transmuted into art has given me a lifelong habit of not just looking at the world, but really seeing it.*

In 1979, I lived in Jerusalem for a year. Times were quieter then, and I had easy access to every inch of Ha-Aretz (which still included the entire Sinai). I played rock-and-roll music in a Jerusalem club called Gitara Shloshim v'Echad, traveled widely, and took more photographs than could be counted.

It was nearly 25 years before I returned to Israel, spending 17

weeks there over the course of eight trips in a year. My family occupied a townhouse in Kfar Vradim, a Western Galilee village that opened its arms and made us part of their small community.

I have never felt so at home as I did in Kfar Vradim, and rarely have I been so compelled to capture images as I was of the coarse and fiery energy that radiates from every inch of this land and this people.

It is my privilege to share the results with you. —SAS

## Andarta (Monument)

By **STEPHEN SCHUSTER**

The widespread desire to provide tangible memorials to those who have fallen in Israel's wars gave sculptors an impetus to introduce numerous abstract monuments into the Israeli landscape.

The Achziv "Sea" monument is characteristic of circa 1960s pieces produced by Haifa-born sculptor Yehiel Shemi (1922-2003).

Originally employed as a construction worker at Kibbutz Kabri in the Western Galilee, Shemi saw art where others did not and began creating abstract works using industrial tools and scrap metal salvaged from junkyards and seashore wrecks.

He is widely recognized as the pioneer of iron sculpture in Israel, and in 1986, Shemi received the Israel Prize, the State's highest recognition of excellence.

A pillar of Israel's Ofakim Chadashim (New Horizons) movement, Shemi was celebrated as something of a unique personality, an unstoppable force. The Ofakim Chadashim group not only legitimized abstract art in Israel but was also its dominant force from its founding in 1948 up to the early 1960s.

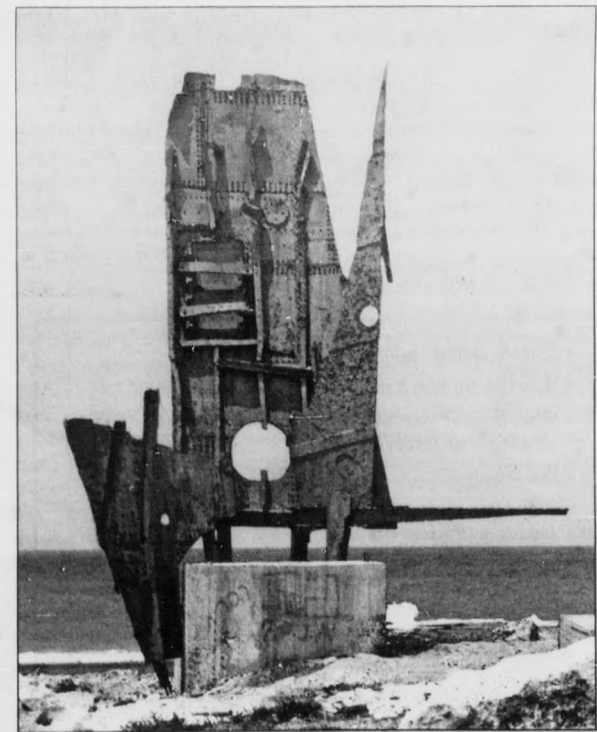
Shemi's sculptures often seem to possess metaphoric significance, with clean-cut, powerful lines reflecting the values and work ethic of a generation for whom the kibbutz was the fulfillment of the Zionist dream.

The rusty edifice on the Achziv beach invokes both the

harshness of nature and the human capacity for violence and destruction.

Stephen Schuster is vice president of Temple Sinai in Worcester, Mass., where he lives with his wife, Julie, and their four children. A published writer, photographer,

and recording artist, Steve is CEO and founder of Rainier, one of the leading marketing consultancies for high-technology companies. An avid songwriter, hiker, gardener, and yoga practitioner, Steve has made nine trips to Israel.



Andarta

Check out "Stoppard's 'Travesties' on stage  
in Connecticut"

— Theater Review by Irene Backalenick,  
page 12

# Travel

## Toronto arts spring agenda

By ROSE KLEINER

Among the many exciting aspects of spring in Toronto, the marvelous theater scene ranks very much at the top. Aside from the city's own offerings, the two theater festivals outside Toronto have achieved such fame that they draw crowds from across the country and the continent.

Several fine new kosher restaurants have opened recently and are a great places for dining and meeting people. A singles hotline informs singles on the latest happenings in the city.

A special attraction this spring is the incredibly successful Israeli Gesher Theatre, which is visiting Toronto June 1 to 5, with two exciting productions. This is the only appearance of the group in Canada and is eagerly awaited by those familiar with the Gesher Theatre.

The works of two great writers will be performed. "Shosha" is based on a story by Isaac Bashevis Singer, and "City" is based on the writings of the Russian Jewish writer Isaac Babel.

The Gesher Theatre is brought to Toronto by prominent philanthropist Leslie Dan and his wife, Anna, as well as by the Koffler Centre for the Arts. Performances will be at the Toronto Centre for the Arts.

Other plays running in To-

ronto are "Evita," at the Princess of Wales Theatre until May 20, and the smash hit musical "Mamma Mia!" at the beautiful Royal Alexandra Theatre, which continues to draw huge crowds. "Suburban Motel" runs at the Factory Theatre until June 12.

Outside of Toronto, the venerable Stratford Festival of Canada has lined up 15 plays in its four theaters. The festival continues into fall. Among the plays starting in the spring are Shakespeare's "The Tempest" and "As You Like It"; "Cat on a Hot Tin Roof" and "Orpheus Descending," by Tennessee Williams; Noel Coward's "Fallen Angels"; Stephen Sondheim's "Into the Woods"; Jason Sherman's "The Brothers Karamazov," and Jerry Herman's "Hello Dolly!"

The other favorite theater festival destination for Torontonians, which starts in the spring and runs into late fall, is the Shaw Festival in Niagara-on-the-Lake, where 10 plays are scheduled this year.

Eight of the plays begin this spring, among them Bernard Shaw's "Major Barbara" and "You Never Can Tell"; Lillian Hellman's "The Autumn Garden"; "Happy End" by Kurt Weil and Bertold Brecht; Somerset Maugham's "The Constant Wife," as well as such other plays as "Journey's End" and "Gypsy."

There is also a lunchtime one-act play, "Something on the Side," which is a new version of Georges Feydeau's farcical confection, "C'est une femme du monde."

### For music lovers

The Toronto Symphony Orchestra presents Itzhak Perlman on May 19, playing Vivaldi, Mozart, and Dvorak. A concert on June 9 brings music by Debussy and Ravel.

On June 11 and 12 the symphony will feature "The Phenomenal Feidman!" with Giora Feidman. Among the pieces played will be Bloch's "Schelemo" ("Hebraic Rhapsody"), and Ora Bat Chaim's "Love for Life" (for two clarinets, double bass, and orchestra), as well as Gershwin's "Porgy and Bess." "Images of Vienna," with pianist Leila Josefowicz, is scheduled for June 15, 16, and 18.

The Lord of the Rings Symphony, a live concert from the film trilogy, with six movements for symphony, orchestra, chorus, and soloists, will be presented June 5 at the Roy Thomson Hall.

The annual Cantorial Concert at Shaarei Shomayim Congregation takes place June 7, with cantors Yaakov Motzen, Shlomo Simcha Sufrin, and others. A concert by Neshama Carlbach is scheduled for June 6.

The Northern Voices Choral Festival takes place June 3-12, providing a glimpse into the choral music of the circumpolar world. Norwegian, Danish, and Latvian choirs will join Canadian choirs at this festival where a world premiere performance of a new work by R. Murray Schafer and Sir John Tavener will be presented.

### Exhibits galore!

The mild spring weather is just right for the Yorkville Artwalk, a free walking tour of neighborhood galleries, sponsored by 10 galleries and taking place on the first Thursday of every month, 6:30-8 p.m. The group meets at Hazelton Lanes, 55 Avenue Road.

The Art Gallery of Ontario is showing "The Shape of Color: Excursions in Color Field Art 1950-2005," with work by Mark Rothko, Helen Frankenthaler, and others. The gallery has just announced new extended hours and is open late three nights (Wednesday, Thursday,

Continued on page 14

# Media Watch

## A Marrano with a wink

By RABBI ELLIOT B. GERTEL

CBS's "Listen Up" was, throughout its first (and



only?) season, a strange mix of stylized obnoxiousness and rationed sweetness. Jason Alexander returned to a television series for a second time after "Seinfeld" to test his (and the audience's) comedic timing.

On this show he plays Tony Kleinman, a newspaper columnist who co-hosts a sports commentary show with Bernie Widmer (Malcolm-Jamal Warner), an African American and a former football star. Tony is, shall we say, a rather abrasive person, socially awkward, and always one decibel short of histrionics. The series focuses on his relationship with his family and with his co-host.

Tony's last name suggested some "Jewish" connection, but little to identify him as Jewish was forthcoming in the first episodes of the show. We meet his pretty, petite wife, Dana (Wendy Makkena), a capable career woman who is a zoo administrator. We also get to know his children, Mickey (With Rothhaar) and Megan (Daniella Monet).

The son is depicted as a simpleton, both obtuse and docile, with some talent for golf but little else in the aptitude department. The daughter is bright and aggressive and uses her gifts to terrorize her brother and to aggravate her dad.

Still, there is a stash of decency and pleasantness that these kids can sometimes muster, or at least that the writers produce whenever the show threatens to totter toward all-out nastiness. One misses, however, any foundation of values or education or civility in the Kleinman home.

In "Listen Up," father knows best – but only to the extent that his insensitivity and obnoxiousness often drive the kids to embarrass themselves and thus to learn from their mistakes.

The most moving moments in the show are at the expense of the children. I think especially of an episode, written by Daphne Pollon, in which Megan sneaks out after her father has forbidden her to attend a party given by a certain boy (who happens to be Mickey's arch-rival at golf), only to learn that that boy has other girls on his mind. When Tony finds out that Megan has gone AWOL, he tracks her to the boy's house only to arrive on time to comfort her.

We first hear that Tony is Jewish, and quite matter-of-factly, in an episode by Dan Kopelman in which Tony's son makes a career choice that, for now at least, he'd rather work as a hospital orderly.

"I clean up after life and death every day," he says proudly, balking at his father's importunateness that Mickey play in a golf game that might lead to advancement in that sport.

At one point Tony's wife asks him, "What did you want to be when you were 16?" "Christian," he responds. "They have the best holidays." Still, in an episode about Thanksgiving, written by Pollon, Tony tells his wife, "I hope you made other plans for Hanukkah."

In the episode that follows the one featuring Mickey's decision to become an orderly, Tony vies with his wife to pick out the best birthday gift for his dad, Max Kleinman. (For some reason Garry Marshall jumped at the opportunity to play Max.) It seems that Kleinman Senior, a retiree in Florida, is obsessed with the weather channel. Dad is much more interested in the skills of the weathercasters than in Tony's TV show.

When Tony complains that his dad spends a lot of time watching "weather that already happened," the latter retorts that Tony's show is "about sports that already happened." Tony forces his son to date the homely daughter of a weather channel executive so that Tony can do a "walk on" appearance on Max's birthday. He tells his father to make sure he has the TV on at 3:25 p.m.

What is nice is that Tony, who can often be self-conscious, is so anxious to surprise his father

Continued on page 14

- What is sacred to *Roseanne* and *The Nanny*?
- How did the film *Keeping the Faith* redefine faith?
- What popular shows reinvented Jewish law and redefined the term *Mitzvah*?
- Did Woody Allen really choose Hell?
- Which are the best big and small screen depictions of Jewish beliefs and practices?

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# Opinion

## Distinguishing friend and foe

By MORRIS J. AMITAY

A medieval philosopher once proclaimed that "the height of folly is being unable to distinguish between friend and foe." You would think that you don't have to be that deep a thinker to arrive at this conclusion.

The fact that there are foreign leaders who can visit your country all smiles – but really not wish you well – seems elementary. More often than not, however, too much of a positive spin is invariably put on an official visit or a friendly statement by a foreign head of state or government by our Israeli friends. Given Israel's relative isolation in the region, this would seem a natural reaction – but it can also be dangerous.

It is disheartening, to say the least, to see Israeli politicians and commentators welcoming scraps of legitimacy doled out by assorted tyrants. Whether it was Putin's recent visit, or statements by Hosni Mubarak (who still refuses to make an official visit to Israel after 24 years in power), the fact remains that both Russian and Egyptian policies pose dangers to Israel's security.

Israel earned its independence and sovereignty the old-fashioned way – with the blood, sweat, and sacrifice of its people. For twenty years it had to face and fight Egyptian armies trained and equipped by the Soviet Union. Now it seems the "help" Egypt and Russia are both offering for the "peace process" is not economic assistance but the arming and training of the Palestinian "security forces."

These are the same forces that include numerous wanted terrorists, some of whom have already used their post-Oslo CIA training to murder Israelis. These are also the same Palestinian "security forces" who now welcome Hamas and Islamic Jihad terrorists into their ranks, instead of disarming them as agreed upon.

Mahmoud Abbas already has in his Fatah movement the Al-Aqsa Brigade, an offshoot of the PLO's Tanzim, which while directly involved in numerous acts of murder and mayhem, is supposed to be under his control.

Who did Putin really think

the 50 armored vehicles he offered to the Palestinians would be used against? And can anyone doubt that this ex-KGB operative's motive is to expand Russia's influence in the Middle East by supplying weapons and training?

It was the height of hypoc-

in U.S. economic and military aid, is assiduously working to undermine Israel while cracking down on dissent at home. Seeking to assert Egypt's leadership in the Arab world and to groom his son Gamal as his successor, the Egyptian dictator seized the opportunity to insert

It was the height of hypocrisy to hear Putin refer to the Holocaust during his visit to Israel while at the same time not only defending his supply of the latest anti-aircraft missiles to Syria, but continuing to boost Iran's nuclear capabilities. Smiles are surely more welcome than scowls. But in the game of nations, deeds always trump words.

rity to hear Putin refer to the Holocaust during his visit to Israel while at the same time not only defending his supply of the latest anti-aircraft missiles to Syria, but continuing to boost Iran's nuclear capabilities. Smiles are surely more welcome than scowls. But in the game of nations, deeds always trump words.

Speaking of words, Putin's incredible statement that "the demise of the Soviet Union was the greatest geopolitical catastrophe of the century" says a lot about the direction in which he is leading Russia. Put bluntly, Putin is no friend of Israel, or of the United States, or of democracy in his own country.

The increasing consolidation of all the levers of power in his hands, and Russia's interference in the USSR's former republics, mark him as a growing threat to U.S. interests in the Middle East and elsewhere.

Fortunately, Russia's dire economic and demographic problems, coupled with recent events in Georgia and Ukraine, limit Putin's mischief-making activities. But it has now become clear that Russia's desire for a greater role in the Middle East has serious negative implications for both Israel and the United States.

Similarly, Egypt's president for life, Hosni Mubarak, the recipient of billions of dollars

himself into the impending Israeli disengagement from Gaza.

Egypt has long sought to play the role of an indispensable intermediary in Palestinian-Israeli negotiations in an effort to keep the Bush administration supportive. But at the same time, Egypt has permitted the smuggling of increasingly sophisticated weapons into Gaza in order to weaken Israel, which it considers an adversary.

It is no secret that Egypt has the ability to halt the influx of arms into Gaza if it so desired. But making Israel more secure is not in its interest. That is why any Israeli disengagement from Gaza that also involves relinquishing control of its borders – land, sea and air – would be fraught with disastrous consequences for Israel.

With more than 200 F-16s, an impressive fleet, and soon to have 1,000 M-1 tanks, Egypt remains a serious conventional threat to Israel while facing no other regional adversaries. Mubarak needs to keep his military happy, and to keep his growing and economically deprived population as well as the Muslim Brotherhood under control.

At the very least he views Israel as a regional rival, and he has so far managed to con-

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## Pro-Israel Palestinians

By DANIEL PIPES

For all their rhetoric about Israel's "vicious" and "brutal"



occupation, Palestinians – including their leaders – sometimes let down their guard and candidly acknowledge how much they prefer Israel to the Palestinian Authority (PA). Here are some of their themes:

### Restraints on violence

After the PA police raided the house of a Hamas supporter in an after-midnight operation, roughing up both him and his 70-year-old father, the father yelled at the police, "Even the Jews did not behave like you cowards."

And the son, when he came out of the PA jail, declared his experience there much worse than in the Israeli ones. An opponent of Yasser Arafat pointed out how Israeli soldiers "would first fire tear gas, and then fire rubber bullets, and only then shoot live ammunition. ... But these Palestinian police started shooting immediately."

### Rule of law

Haydar 'Abd ash-Shafi,' a Gazan leader, once observed, "Can anyone imagine that a family would be happy to hear a knock at the door in the middle of the night from the Israeli Army?" He went on: "When the infighting began in Gaza, the people were happy because the Israeli Army imposed a curfew."

Likewise, Musa Abu Marzouk of Hamas compared Arafat unfavorably with the Jewish state: "We saw representatives of the Israeli opposition criticize [Israeli Prime Minister Ehud] Barak, and they were not arrested... but in our case the PA arrests people as the first order of business."

### Democracy

Israel's 1999 elections, in which the sitting prime minister lost, impressed many Palestinian observers. Columnists remarked on the smooth transition in Israel and wanted the same for themselves: "I

envy [the Israelis] and desire a similar regime in my future state."

Even Hasan al-Kashif, director-general of the PA's Information Ministry, contrasted the changes in Israel with the power of "several names in our leadership" which go on ruling in perpetuity. Nayif Hawatma, leader of the terrorist Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, wants the PA to make decisions like Israel, by presenting them for a vote.

### Minority rights

Christians and secular Muslims particularly appreciate Israel's protection at a time when Palestinian politics has taken an increasingly Islamist cast. A Christian Palestinian declares that when the Palestinian state comes into existence, "the sacred union against the Zionist enemy will die. It will be time to settle accounts. We will undergo the same as our Lebanese brothers or the Copts in Egypt. It saddens me to say so, but Israeli laws protect us."

### Freedom of expression

In an ironic turn of events, Na'im Salama, a lawyer living in Gaza, was arrested by the PA on charges he slandered it by writing that Palestinians should adopt Israeli standards of democracy; for his audacity, he spent time in jail.

Hanan Ashrawi, an obsessive anti-Israel critic, acknowledges (reluctantly) that the Jewish state has something to teach the nascent Palestinian polity: "Freedom would have to be mentioned, although it has only been implemented in a selective way, for example, the freedom of speech."

Iyad as-Sarraj, a prominent psychiatrist and director of the Gaza Community Mental Health Program, confesses that "during the Israeli occupation, I was 100 times freer [than under the Palestinian Authority]."

### Economic benefits

Palestinians who live in Israel (including Jerusalem) appreciate Israel's economic success, social services, and many benefits. Salaries in Israel are about five times higher than in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, and Israel's social security system has no parallel on the Palestinian side.

Palestinians living outside of Israel want economically in;

Continued on page 14

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# Pesach Sheni, 1945

By I. I. COHEN

On Wednesday, April 25, 1945, the SS guards in Kaufering's watchtowers suddenly disappeared.

The block supervisors in our camp – a satellite of Dachau – stopped beating and cursing; they knew that the explosives that had grown louder each day signaled the death throes of the Third Reich. Those of us whose legs could still carry them broke into the camp kitchen and hauled away potatoes, flour, cabbage, and pieces of bread. A day earlier we would have been shot on sight for lesser sins, but now, several days since we had been given any food, our hunger overpowered our fright. We stuffed both our bellies and our pockets.

---

Suddenly the silence was broken by the familiar murderous voices of our German captors.

"Everyone in a row! Roll call!" In a flash the thugs were once again running about with clubs and revolvers in hand, mercilessly chasing and dragging everyone out of the barracks. Having already experienced several years together in the ghetto, our small group of young Gerer Chasidim from Lodz tried to stick together.

We discussed the situation. It was quite clear that the Allied forces were close by. Rumor had it that the SS command had ordered camp commanders to exterminate all inmates so that no living testimony would be available to the Allied armies. We found it hard to believe in such a diabolical scheme, but six years under Nazi rule had taught us that bleak prophecies had a tendency to materialize.

We debated our alternatives. Should we follow orders and evacuate the camp, or risk trying to stay behind and await the Allies? We decided to stay and, one by one, stole into the dysentery block, where only the hopelessly ill lay. We hoped that the guards would choose not to enter the contaminated area.

But our hopes were dashed soon enough when our block door crashed open and an SS officer, his machine gun crackling, shouted, "Everyone out! The camp is to be blown up!" Silence. We didn't stir, the Nazi left, and night fell.

Suddenly the air shook with the wailing of sirens. The Allies were bombing the German defenses! We prayed that the thunderous explosions would go on forever, and we eventually fell asleep to the beautiful sound of the bombs.

The next morning we awoke to an ominous silence, broken only by the moans of the dying. We arose cautiously and went outside the block. There was desolation everywhere, and a gaping hole in the barbed wire. Had it been torn open by the fleeing Germans? Were we free?

We went to the other barracks and shared our discovery with their frightened inhabitants – mostly *musselmen*, or emaciated "skeletons." Soon enough we heard the unmistakable rumble of an approaching convoy. We sat and waited, our fear leavened with excitement.

The fear proved more prescient and soon enough melted into acute disappointment when the all-too-familiar SS uniforms came once again into view. The Nazis had returned, bringing an entire detachment of prisoners from other camps with them to help them finish their work.

Amid the fiendish din of screams and obscenities, we hurriedly hid in one of the blocks, covered ourselves with straw and rags, and lay still, our hearts pounding with terror. Soon we heard footsteps in the block, and I felt a hand on my head. We had been discovered, by non-Jewish inmates of other labor and POW camps.

We pleaded with them to ignore us and offered them our potatoes, but just as the invaders had agreed, an SS officer came stomping in, swinging his club, which he then efficiently and heartlessly used on our heads. A boot on the behind, and we were on our way to the trucks, accompanied by the commandos and the SS.

We were picked up by our arms and legs and thrown onto a wagon piled with barely human-looking bodies; the moaning of the sick was replaced by the silence of the dead. By a stroke of luck, though, while the guards were busy with another wagon, my friend Yossel Carmel and I managed to roll out of the truck and found refuge in a nearby latrine. Though our hearts had long since turned to stone, our stomachs were convulsing.

Eventually the wagons left, and we crept back into the very block we had occupied earlier. I tore down the light hanging from the ceiling, and we posed, not unconvincingly, as corpses. Every so often the door would open, and we would hear a shout of "Everyone out!" but we just lay perfectly still. Darkness fell, motors rumbled, and then there was quiet.

Friday, April 27, 1945, brought a cold morning. White clouds chased each other across the bright blue sky as a frigid wind blew through the barracks, chilling our bones. Periodically the earth trembled with an explosion; we sat quietly, each engrossed in his own thoughts. Suddenly we heard motorcycles rumbling and dogs barking. Our hearts fell. Once again the Germans were back.

We soon heard footsteps in the block, and then a frenzied voice, "Swine! You are waiting for the Americans? Come with me!" There followed a commotion, the sound of running, the shattering of glass, and then a burst of machine gun fire. I peeked and saw that those who had been hiding near the window had tried to escape. Yossel and I had not been detected but were paralyzed with fright. Footsteps approached, and then we heard the rustling of straw. When we felt tapping on the piles in which we were hiding, our terrified souls almost departed us.

We held our breath in fear as the footsteps moved away. Peeking through a hole in the straw that covered me, I felt smoke burning my eyes. Frantically we ripped off the straw and rags and saw flames all around us. Hand in hand, Yossel and I fumbled toward the door, suffocating from the smoke, our heads spinning. In a moment that seemed an eternity, we found ourselves outside. Just a few yards from us stood the German murderers, fortunately with their backs to us.

The entire camp was ablaze. We threw ourselves on the first pile of corpses that we saw and lay still; we no doubt resembled our camouflage. Around us we heard heavy footsteps, screams, and the moaning of the fatally wounded. What we saw was blood, fire, and clouds of smoke – hell on earth, complete with demons.

When silence finally fell again, I mumbled to Yossel that we ought to say *vidui*, the confession of sins a Jew makes periodically but especially when facing death. He chided me to remember what I had told him when we arrived in Auschwitz, our first concentration camp. The Sages of the Talmud, he reminded me, had admonished that "Even if the sword is braced on your neck, never despair of Divine mercy." Yossel recalled, too, the Sages' admonition that in times of danger Jews should renew their commitment to their faith.

We crawled to a nearby pit, shivering with cold. Through my smoke-filled eyes and fear-ridden senses, I thought I saw SS guards

*Continued on page 15*

# Israel: As I See It

## Contrasts on Holocaust Day

By SAMSON KRUPNICK

Holocaust Day was observed officially in all of Israel.



The opening evening program was in the Yad Vashem plaza, with many survivors in the audience.

Appropriate messages were delivered by President Moshe Katzav and by Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, emphasizing the necessity of spreading the tragedy of humanity reaching a very inhuman lowest level in destroying six million Jews in the most cruel manner ever performed.

The German Nazis and their willing helpers from most of the European countries killed over one million Jewish children as well as five million Jewish men and women of all ages.

The Allies, led by the United States, Britain, and Russia, could have saved millions of Jews by making several air attacks, but no attacks were made, despite the pressures that were put upon President Franklin D. Roosevelt by Jewish close friends of the president.

We spoke with one such friend at a special conference of Jewish leadership in Pittsburgh in 1944. He promised to do his best, to no avail. "The war must go on without interruptions," declared the president.

The urgent message now was to continue to emphasize this cruelty and utter neglect by all the world.

Earlier, the new exhibit in Yad Vashem drew great response by many nations, including the United Nations, for the first time. Nevertheless, despite these important contributions for humanity to rise to proper levels, antisemitism continues to increase.

The reading of the names at Yad Vashem and in the Knesset was a procedure throughout Israel in many observances of the Holocaust. All stood at

attention for two minutes at 10 a.m. on Thursday morning, Holocaust Day.

All movies and entertainment places were closed as the nation mourned the great loss. Six huge torches were lit at Yad Vashem by survivors

He remarked in sorrow, "Here we lost our dignity of living, even our dignity of dying. Yet we dare not give up. We must hope for a proper humanity!"

Rabbi Israel Meir Lau, a survivor at age 5, asked this

**All movies and entertainment places were closed as the nation mourned the great loss. Six huge torches were lit at Yad Vashem by survivors who related the miracle of their surviving the horrors of the death camps.**

**What brought international attention was the 18th March of the Living to Auschwitz and Birkenau by 21,000 marchers, some 16,000 of whom were young people from many countries.**

who related the miracle of their surviving the horrors of the death camps.

What brought international attention was the 18th March of the Living to Auschwitz and Birkenau by 21,000 marchers, some 16,000 of whom were young people from many countries.

Participating were President of Poland Marc Balka and Prime Minister of Hungary Frantz Georchani. Of the three million of Poland, over a million were killed in the camps, most of whom were murdered in Auschwitz Birkenau.

President Balka quoted the late Pope John Paul II against antisemitism and in favor of freedom of religion and expression as the goal of Poland.

Prime Minister Sharon declared that Israel was created to "protect the Jewish people without need to depend on others."

Most impressive were the remarks of two survivors. The first was Professor Elie Wiesel, Nobel laureate, who designated Auschwitz as the "special evil place," the largest cemetery in the world, with over a million "graves."

question: "Why? What have we done wrong?" with no answers available. He had noticed a scratched out word, *nekomo* (revenge). His response was, "The revenge is that we are here. The revenge is that we are home. The revenge is that we have a homeland. The revenge is that we have a garden of Israel. The revenge is that we have come here with a blue and white flag and a Star of David!"

This message he recited with great enthusiasm to the accompaniment of great applause by all present.

Later, Prime Minister Sharon came to Auschwitz and attached a *mezuzah* upon the door of the Jewish barracks, which houses a Holocaust display, in the company of Chief Rabbi Lau, Rabbi Drukman, and Rabbi Grossman. This act concluded a very impressive ceremony admired by all in attendance and by all who watched the TV presentation around the globe.

Of interest were the visits of President of Russia Vladimir Putin and Prime Minister of Turkey Recep Tayyip Erdogan a few days before Holocaust Day. Both paid courtesy calls upon Yad Vashem and met

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with President Katzav and Prime Minister Sharon.

Putin had his own reasons in addition to an interest in participating in the peace-making process. Business deals of over \$200 million were recorded with a feeling of great friendship. He was reminded that over a million Jewish soldiers fought with the allies in Russia.

The prime minister of Turkey came with a delegation of over 200, including 100 business men, six ministers, and Jewish leaders of Turkey. The clear objective was to renew the excellent relationship that we've had for many years, including,

above all, the military partnership. Deals of some \$500 million were completed, and good relations were renewed properly.

Of great interest is the fact that the Turkish Jewish community goes back some 513 years to when the Jews were expelled from Spain and Portugal in 1492 and found a welcome home in a Muslim country, Turkey.

This contrast of major nations seeking close association with the State of Israel is surely a welcome relief from the bitter Holocaust sorrow.

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# Jews by Choice

## How does Judaism affect my life?

By MARY HOFMANN

I've been asked to talk to the local Kiwanis Club about



how Judaism affects my life. Thought I'd run it by you folks as well!

It is said that Judaism is built on three main concepts: Torah, *avodah*, and *gemilut chasadim*.

For a modern, practicing Jew, those are three major, elegantly simple, strands necessary to living an informed, blessed, fulfilled Jewish life. But they are so much more than strands – and so much more than simple.

### Torah

At its narrowest, as the world probably sees it, the Torah is a scroll containing the five books of Moses. It is read in portions throughout the year and reread every year. But for Jews, the Torah is actually an ongoing dialogue between God, the text and its students.

To a modern, practicing Jew, to do Torah means:

- having enough of a grasp

on Hebrew – a language of ambiguity, poetry, metaphor, and multiple meanings written in a calligraphy containing no vowels.

- to interact with the Torah, to learn from it, to interpret it in the face of so many things, understanding that translating the Torah into any other language renders it static and the version of a translator.

- all Jewish learning – and learning on beyond Jewish learning. It means a fundamental orientation that learning – that questioning and hypothesizing and applying and merging new knowledge with old knowledge – is what life is all about.

There is a reason why Jews have such a high literacy rate, attain graduate degree levels, and are so highly represented in the sciences and every other academic discipline.

In my own life, I study Torah on Friday evenings and on Saturdays. I study Kabbalah on Mondays. I study Hebrew on Wednesdays. I teach and study everything else I can get my mind around the rest of the week. It is no coincidence that I carry multiple graduate degrees, as do my husband and our two sons. Our daughter, also a wife and mother, manages to continue her work in philosophy.

### Avodah

*Avodah* is the work we do to find sacred connections to God, community, and self. *Avodah* encompasses all Jewish practice. It's what you need to learn to do to be competent, Jewishly.

At its narrowest, it means the fulfillment of all those commandments in Leviticus that are explicated and made law in the Mishnah, the Talmud, and today in the way of rabbinical decisions and responsa.

To a modern, practicing Jew, to do *avodah* means:

- Being responsible to do what we know we *should* do – as individuals and as members of a congregation, a community, and a world: we believe *doing* leads to *feeling* (and if it doesn't, we know it is still good to do good).

- Our days can be filled with blessings – like in "Fiddler," there really is a blessing for everything. We bless what is sacred (and everything, in its way, is sacred), and by constantly reciting blessings, we are, as you'd say, constantly stopping to smell the roses. It forces us to see the blessings all around us.

- Doing *avodah* brings order, beauty, meaning, and insight to our lives.

There is a reason Jews pay attention to commandments (*mitzvot*). There is a reason why Jews tend to be law-abiding citizens who are devoted to family, to community, and to philanthropy.

In my own life, my practice keeps me focused, keeps me aware and appreciative of

all that is happening around me in the moment. It keeps me attuned to relationships more than things, to processes more than products, to caring rather than indifference.

### Gemilut Chasadim

*Gemilut chasadim* is the responsibility to do what we can to make the world a better, holier place. It implies social justice, care for the environment, responsibility to our fellow creatures – human and non-human – and what we think of as *tikkun olam*, repair of the world.

At its narrowest it means doing what we know is the right thing.

To a modern, practicing Jew, to do *gemilut chasadim* means:

- Seeking out peace
- Looking for ways to help

# Musings

## Memorial Day

By BATYA MEDAD

When we moved to Shiloh almost 24 years ago, there was



no cemetery here. We joined the few dozen families living on the hills where over 3,000 years ago good Jews came on pilgrimages to worship G-d. Ancient pottery shards were found in the soil of the hills that sloped to the Tel, the biblical city of Shiloh. We were all young, enthusiastic, and innocent.

In those days we were able to walk freely all over Judea and Samaria, enjoy the beauty of the spring's wild flowers, and wander safely through neighboring Arab villages. School trips were to biblical sites and were unrestricted. Every year we took our second grade classes to re-enact the battles of the Maccabees on the same mountains where the Hanukkah story took place, in between Eli and Ma'ale Levona.

On rare occasions the Arabs attacked vehicles by throwing stones. It was more annoying than dangerous. And we always knew that the later at night, the safer it was for us. There wasn't electricity in the Arab villages. The generators were turned off at night, and the people slept.

Neither during the British Mandate nor under Jordanian

rule was the area developed with modern necessities such as an electric grid and piped, purified water. It was Israel that cared enough about the ordinary Arab resident to provide these services.

Yes, life was rather idyllic, though not always easy.

Everything changed that night, less than a year after the Gulf War, when three buses left Shiloh traveling to Tel Aviv, to the demonstration urging then-Prime Minister Yitzchak Shamir to be strong and not to give in to pressure while at the Madrid Conference.

I was in the first bus. It was very crowded, over-filled with children and some adults. I sat with my two young sons. I was terrified that if, G-d forbid, the bus rolled off the narrow road down the mountain, we'd all be killed.

Suddenly, when we were approaching the Tapuach Junction north of Shiloh, the driver got a message. The bus behind us had been attacked. Bullets entered the bus, injuring and murdering. The driver was dead, and my friend and neighbor Rachella Druk was dying.

Ambulances and helicopters were sent to take the injured to the hospital, and we all waited at the scene of the terror attack. Then, somehow, we proceeded, reeling in shock, to demonstrate in Tel Aviv.

Yitzchak Shamir wasn't strong, wasn't steadfast, and didn't defend his country. Two wonderful people were sacrificed for nothing. I've always felt that if my friend had been murdered for a reason, it was

*Continued on page 15*

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# Jewish Theater

## Stoppard's "Travesties" on stage in Connecticut

By IRENE BACKALENICK

When is a Jewish playwright a Jewish playwright?



That is the question.

Tom Stoppard was born Tomas Straussler in Zlin, Czechoslovakia, in 1937. His Jewish family escaped the Nazis by fleeing to Singapore, where his father was killed in the Japanese invasion. His mother later remarried Kenneth Stoppard, a major in the British army, and the family resettled in England. Thus Tomas Straussler became Tom Stoppard, and England's most important contemporary playwright was born.

One searches vainly for Jewish themes or characters in Stoppard's works, but one cannot deny his strong interest in history, literature, physics, international affairs, his devastating brand of humor, and his formidable use of lan-

guage. One might make a case for those being Jewish traits.

In any event, the Stoppard plays are mounted round the world, and, at the moment, his "Travesties" is on stage at Long Wharf Theatre in New Haven, Conn.

To be properly prepared for "Travesties," one should definitely read the play in advance. Moreover, a working acquaintance with Oscar Wilde's "The Importance of Being Earnest" is imperative, not to mention some knowledge of James Joyce's "Ulysses." Unfortunately, most people do not read texts in advance, and Stoppard's lines – often brilliant and hilarious – are likely to fly over their heads.

Stoppard has a way of incorporating and building upon the works of others, with never a qualm or apology. Moreover, he interweaves history with fiction, past with present, playing fast and loose with time. In the process he sounds off on art, politics, life, and love, and the result, in this case, is a zany roller coaster ride.

"Travesties," to be specific, is a memory piece. An old man, one Henry Carr, looks back upon his years in Zurich,

Switzerland. The play moves between the crotchety old Carr of 1972, trying imperfectly to remember the past, and his youthful self of 1917.

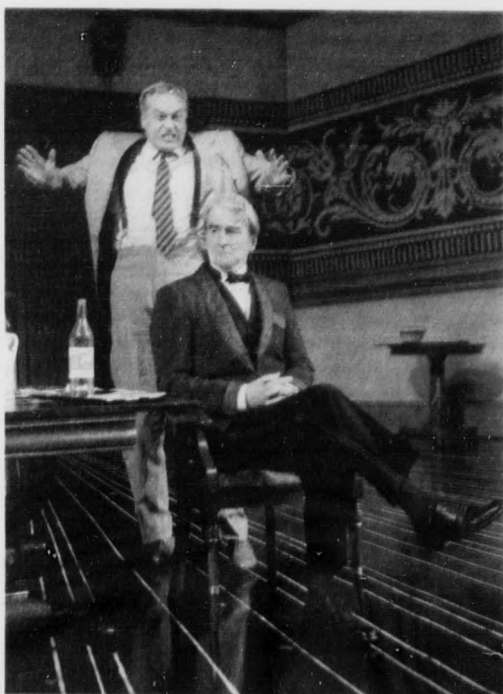
In Zurich of those war years, the city was crowded with intellectuals and artists of every stripe, refugees from the surrounding countries at war. Stoppard draws on the historic facts that James Joyce, Vladimir Lenin, and Tristan Tzara (founder of the Dadaist art movement) were indeed in Zurich at the time. He adds to the mix two attractive young women, whom he names Gwendolyn and Cecily (names Oscar Wilde fans will recognize).

One must respect Stoppard's formidable talent, but does "Travesties" work as a play? In our view, no. What is certainly lacking is a through-line. This is not a piece that goes some place, where a viewer waits eagerly to see what will happen next. Though Lenin's story is clearly depicted, it does not constitute the very core of "Travesties," but is merely one of the side shows.

Yet, whatever the play lacks, this particular production supplies in spades. Director Gregory Boyd has turned "Travesties" into a lively three-ring circus, with unexpected dance numbers, vaudeville tunes, strip-tease acts, and even an all-out pie-in-your-face routine. But with all of this, Boyd keeps it firmly under control and brings it off with grace and elegance. Moreover, he is blessed with a fine cast.

In all, this almost three-hour show (with a first act that runs about an hour and a half) can be heavy-going, particularly if one is not in touch with Stoppard's witty lines. But the music hall atmosphere and first-rate performances may provide theatergoers with enough compensation.

Theater critic Irene Backalenick covers theater for national and regional publications. She has a Ph.D. in theater criticism from City University Graduate Center. Her book "East Side Story – Ten Years with the Jewish Repertory Theatre" won a first-place national book award in history. She welcomes comments at: [IreneBack@aol.com](mailto:IreneBack@aol.com).



Tom Hewitt and Sam Waterston in "Travesties"

# As I Heard It

## CD showcases diverse music of Conservative movement

By MORTON GOLD

I received a CD, "The Spirit of Passover," Vol. 4 in the Spirit Series, featuring the Voices of the Conservative Movement, just in time for Pesach. For the most part it is an excellent compilation of excerpts of various recordings with an admirable booklet chock full of informative material for which Hazzan Sam Weiss should be given a hearty "well done."

There are 16 selections that illustrate the wide and diverse musical approaches within the Conservative movement.

The opening selections, "Ki Lo Na'eh" and "Khad Gadya," brilliantly performed by Hazzanim Meir Finkelstein, Albert Mizrahi, and David Propis, is easily the most flashy and thrilling selection. The only way this could be topped is by a solo performance by Moishe Oysher himself. For those of you who have never heard the legendary hazzan-performer sing this music, this performance will have to be a most acceptable equivalent.

This performance is taken from the CD "A Tribute to Moshe Oysher" by "The Three Jewish Tenors." The only problem with having such a terrific opening number is, what are you going to do for an encore? A far different setting of the same text with a tepid performance is the last selection.

My main *chessorin* is the inclusion of this last selection as well as the placement on the CD of the first. The committee who arranged the contents of this CD saw things differently, and that is their right.

Moving on, the second cut is a setting by Hazzan Jeff Klepper, "The Empty Chair," performed by Hazzan Eva Robbins. This sentimental tune, which should appeal to young adolescents, is performed in appropriate style.

The third cut, "Kiddush," was composed and performed by Hazzan Moshe Taube and is taken from the CD "Synagogue Masterpieces." While the singing is superb, the tinny electric organ detracts from an otherwise fine rendition.

The fourth cut is a typical junior choir (this one from Beth El of Baltimore) singing the "Mah Nishtanah," arranged as well as conducted by Hazzan

Thom King and Shazy King. A far different choral sound is found on the next cut, with a superb setting of "Dayeinu," composed and arranged by Hazzan Gerald Cohen and conducted by Barbara Tagg. It is taken from the CD "Generations."

This choral group must be considered as the worthy successor to the Beth Abraham Youth Chorale of Dayton, Ohio. It aptly shows that children need to do more than merely look cute. The music is interesting and is an effective as well as affective setting of the text. I liked it.

Cut number six, the "Prayer for Dew," is taken from the CD "Generation to Generation" and features the voices of Moshe Schullof and Yossele Rosenblatt (z"l). While the timbre sounds like the cleaned up sound from a 78 rpm record, the singing is simply marvelous. What voices! What breath control!

One is humbled by simply listening to a performance like this. To think that performances as well as voices like these were once the norm in our synagogues is sobering to say the least. No, it is not hip, with it, up to date, participatory, or any other kind of gimmick. It is, however, very Jewish.

If this latter selection is Orthodox-leaning, the magnificent setting by Hazzan Jacob Lefkowitz of "Tal Bo T'vaeikh," stunningly sung by his son Hazzan David Lefkowitz, is to my mind the ideal of what cantorial music for the Conservative synagogue ought to be. This cut is taken from the CD "Song and Celebration."

The next cut features a Moditz melody to the text of "Hodu Ladonai," arranged by Herbert Rothgarber and sung by Hazzan Sam Weiss. This is a pleasant enough tune, and while the piano playing of Zalman Mlotek is admirable, the part itself seems too busy for this type of tune.

Cut nine is a setting of the text of "Libavtini" written by Hazzan Ramon Tasat, who accompanies himself on the guitar. It is a kind of love song, and the cantor sings both of the two parts. It comes from the CD "Libavtini." I am of the opinion

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## Salwen on the Scene

### 'We Fly Home'

By JUDY SALWEN

Over the years, writing my travel stories, I have, when-



ever possible, flown different airlines in order to provide readers with information about comfort, service, punctuality, and value.

Soon I am flying Lufthansa for the first time and want to share an unusual program being offered. It's called "We Fly Home," and it's available for travel to Israel, Poland, Russia, India, and Greece. Additional countries will be added in the near future.

Specifically aimed at U.S. residents with ethnic roots abroad, "We Fly Home" has a micro site, [lufthansa-usa.com/weflyhome](http://lufthansa-usa.com/weflyhome), providing a customized solution for visiting friends and family abroad.

Included are individual country pages, in English or the local language, plus the latest local travel news and information about booking exclusive low fares and simplified fare rules. For travelers who fly on or before Sept. 30, 2005, 2,000 frequent flyer bonus miles are awarded.

Check out Lufthansa's "We Fly Home." It's money in your pocket.

*Professor Salwen is on the faculty of New York University and is an author, broadcaster, and lecturer. Look for her new travel stories this summer. Prof. Salwen is available to lecture about travel and lifestyles.*

## Book Review

### Three valuable guides to kosher living

By MORTON I. TEICHER

*How To Keep Kosher.* By Lise Stern. New York: William Morrow, 2004. 303 pages. \$24.95.

*Kosher for Everybody.* By Trudy Garfunkel. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2004. 272 pages. \$19.95.

*Kosher Living.* By Ron Isaacs. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2005. 286 pages. \$24.95.

Most people associate "kosher" with food and dietary laws. This conventional understanding animated Lise Stern and Trudy Garfunkel to write their superior guides to maintaining a kosher kitchen.

By contrast, Ron Isaacs, rabbi of a Conservative synagogue in Bridgewater, N.J., has taken the meaning of "kosher" as "proper or fit, the correct way to do something according to Jewish law and tradition." Consequently, food is only one of the 44 topics he examines, arranging them in alphabetical order,

from abortion to witnesses.

His easy-to-follow format divides each subject into four sections: What's Kosher, What's Not Kosher, What the Experts Say, and Sources.

In the first two sections he asks questions such as: "When is it kosher to have an abortion?" "Is it kosher to do stem cell research?" "What kind of arguing is not kosher?" "Is it kosher to own a gun store?" "Is it kosher to be overly generous?" "Is it kosher to criticize God?" "Is it ever kosher to tell a lie?" "Is being a workaholic kosher?" "Is it kosher to masturbate?" "Is assisted suicide kosher?" "Is the current war in Iraq a kosher war?"

To each of these questions, and to many more, Isaacs provides his clear answers, always recognizing that Reform, Orthodox, and Reconstructionist Jews may have other views. He cites sources, mainly from the Talmud and the Bible, displaying his impressive erudition and his considerable research. The book is an authoritative manual, richly demonstrating a broadly enhanced understanding of what "kosher" means.

Pursuing a different objective, Stern and Garfunkel have each produced valuable guides to the Jewish dietary laws and how to observe them.

Stern is a journalist, specializing in food. Here she addresses such questions as "How, When, and Where to Keep Kosher," "Where Do These Kosher Laws Come From, Anyway?" and "Why Keep Kosher?"

She discusses kosher food and beverages, making the kitchen kosher, food and the Jewish holidays, and she concludes with some recipes for

Shabbat and festival meals. She also lists some useful Websites, including two that provide a database of kosher restaurants, kosher markets, and kosher caterers. Her comprehensive presentation will appeal to all Jews, regardless of their level of observance.

Instead of referring the reader to the Internet, Garfunkel, author of four previous books on kosher food and dance history, offers a 100-page world-wide directory of kosher hotels, resorts, tours, cruises, camps, restaurants, caterers, markets, and bakeries.

She discusses the history of kosher foods in America, kosher symbols, kosher certification, kosher meat, kosher wine and liquor. She offers more than 50 pages of recipes.

Garfunkel recognizes the special problems of vegetarians and the lactose-intolerant who wish to be kosher, and she provides two excellent chapters addressed to these individuals. This a practical, down-to-earth handbook that constitutes a first-rate resource for all those interested in kosher observance.

Taken together, these three books constitute a set of valuable and authentic reference works, basing solutions to contemporary issues on Jewish tradition. They enrich our understanding of how and why to be kosher, not only with respect to food, but also with regard to living robust Jewish lives in all aspects of our existence.

*Dr. Teicher is the founding dean of the Wurzelweil School of Social Work, Yeshiva University, and dean emeritus of the School of Social Work, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.*

## Book Review

### Non-fiction titles for Yom Haatzmaut

By SYBIL KAPLAN

*A Table for One.* By Aharon Appelfeld, paintings by Meir Appelfeld. Toby Press. 250



pages. \$29.95.

Aharon Appelfeld is best known as a Holocaust survivor who has written almost exclusively on that subject.

In this unusual work about Jerusalem, translated from the Hebrew, Aharon writes and his son, who studied at the Royal Academy of Art in London, paints landscapes of Jerusalem. He calls the views he and his son have of Jerusalem "a steady observation from the sidelines of life, from where a simple beauty emerges."

He starts off talking about his happiest hours spent in cafes and where all of his novels have

been written. He reminisces about his life. He talks about the importance of Jerusalem. The tone is totally different from the works Appelfeld has written. The paintings are also not typical of Jerusalem but intimate and low-key.

To anyone who loves Jerusalem, this would make a warm and beautiful gift.

*Waiting for Peace.* By Liza M. Wiemer and Benay Katz. Gefen. 200 pages. \$15.95.

If I could recommend one book for reading at this time, so everyone could understand what Israelis go through as they live their daily lives, this would be it. To those of us who have lived in Israel and have friends there, every news announcement throws us into a state of I hope to G-d this isn't about someone I know.

Some of us writers go to Israel, as I have four times in the past three years, and ignore the suicide bombings and terrorist attacks to show our support. Liza Wiemer is one of us, and so in April 2002, she decided

to see what the terrorism was really like for Israelis.

She spent a month and worked tirelessly with her friend Benay to interview 75 individuals and get their thoughts and feelings. What emerges most strongly is the fact that everyone had a connection to a terror victim, and everyone had either physical or emotional wounds.

Israelis refuse to give in to fear. They are cautious, careful; they appreciate life; they are optimistic, or they couldn't get through each day.

Each chapter has photographs of the Israelis interviewed, and each chapter is a wonderful portrait of real people living their lives with courage.

One modern Orthodox woman says, "There are people out there [who are] out to kill me for no other reason than my being Jewish."

Wiemer writes at one point, "The cell phone is an essential stress-relieving tool for every soldier," and, one might add, every soldier's family.

My only fault with the book

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is the placement of footnotes in the back. Continually flipping back and forth when I want to read these significant points of information was inconvenient, and having them at the bottom of each page would have made it easier. Other than that, this is a well-written, important must-read for those who care about Israel.

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## Podet

*Continued from page 5*

in Egypt, actually an object of hero worship to a stunning degree. It is too mild a word to call her following a cult. I have a number of her records. Somehow I always thought her name was Kalthum. Oh, well, wrong again.

In her time – she was a contemporary of Nasser's – Kulthum was a force in politics within and beyond Egypt, helping to bring down one government and secure another. Bigger than Madonna, even.

Alas, Foramen will not be going to Egypt to study her life and work there with regard to the rise of Egyptian nationalism, worthy topic though it is. For one thing, his general undergraduate record is not good enough, and his specific record in this area, Near East studies, presents less than a perfect 4.000 (=A) grade average. One B might be permissible in a total record; much more than that is evidence of lack of seriousness of purpose.

His recommendations or references are either recognizable garbage filled with generalities – "terrific student" – the sort that award a score of "upper 1 percent" in all categories and fail to back up that judgment with specifics, or else they reveal critical failures. He has no publications himself and gives little evidence of having mastered the literature of the field. His Arabic is quite good, but in this crowd, quite good is not good enough.

Finally, what he wants to do can be done mostly from this country, where Umm Kulthum's career is highly documented. Including her records. It is hard to justify a year in Egypt at taxpayer expense for this.

He gets a 62, which means he will not be funded.

Jim Bimmer is an oddity. He presents a marvelous record, stellar achievements, especially in language arts, and wants to do work on modern Arabic in Egypt. One of his references, however, lets slip the fact that he is, despite his name, a native speaker of Arabic, which effectively disqualifies him. It would have come out eventually anyway. He must have known that in advance, and we wonder why he even submitted for this award.

Lastly, Elijah Langerhans is a historian from a university in

California, and he too wants to work in Egypt. His interest is in the university and the street in Nasser's Egypt: did one influence the other? Which way? How important was the interplay? Since the university in Egypt is, in fact, a religious institution, how much did the religious factor influence that relationship?

Nasser's time was partly a time of revolution, and the shape of modern Egyptian nationalism was largely laid down then. Before then, for example, Egyptians thought of themselves as Egyptians, certainly not Arabs, and during Khedival times the language of the Egyptian upper class was exclusively French. Arabic was used only for the servants: *pas devant les domestiques* and all that.

The university class, the educated, the military, were movers of nationalism. The university-street relationship is an important one, but it is not clear that Langerhans has access to his sources. I see no letters guaranteeing him access to the proper collections, although he says he has such contacts.

Langerhans' record is excellent, a B or two on his general studies, but nothing lower than an A in this area. That meets the standard.

But does he need a year in Egypt to collect that source material? How much could he do from here, or even from a short stay there using a photocopy?

His Arabic is very fluent, but not of the top class ("near native proficiency"); is that going to be a problem?

In sum: a 70.

My other reader thinks it is clearly an 80. We meet and thrash out our areas of disagreement and settle finally on a compromise closer to his evaluation than to mine.

Langerhans will be funded. Barely.

There are 40 of these to be gotten through, justified, argued, and decided. By the time Thursday rolls around, we are exhausted, happy to be done, and quite ready to leave Washington.

But proud of what we have done. We have been part of the machinery that makes the Fulbright work, indeed, that makes the entire enterprise of scholarship in America work.

We have recognized and filtered out the best of the best, no easy task when all those who have gotten to this rank are high achievers.

When we are thanked on our last day, we answer that it has been a privilege.

It is only the truth.

Comments? [podetah@buffalo.state.edu](mailto:podetah@buffalo.state.edu).

## Kleiner

*Continued from page 6*  
Friday) a week.

The Milk International Children's Festival of the Arts runs until May 29 at the Harbourfront Centre. The festival includes theater, music, dance, and puppetry from as far away as New Zealand, Switzerland, Germany, Denmark, and Spain.

Starting in May, the Harbourfront Centre, at Toronto's beautiful harbor, plays host to tall ships from all over the world. Often the public is invited to board the vessels free of charge.

### Wheels and meals

Those who enjoy walking will appreciate Toronto's world-class system of trails and parks. Visitors to the city in June might wish to participate in the Mount Sinai Walk/Run for the Best Medicine on Sunday, June 19. It is a great way to get to know the community and to meet people.

For kosher dining, several new kosher restaurants have opened recently, increasing the number of choices available to the public. Gladstone's Wine Bar & Grill is a fine dining meat restaurant, as is King Solomon's Table, where one can also choose the Chinese buffet.

A new dairy restaurant, Umami Café, has opened in the northern part of the city, at 441 Clark Avenue West.

Kosher meals are also available on two of the largest university campuses in the city. Downtown, the University of Toronto Hillel Café is open for lunch and Friday night dinner. To the north of the city, York University's kosher Country Style Coffee and King David franchise is located in Winters

College and is open daily from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Those staying downtown for Shabbat can visit the Minsker Shul, Toronto's Jewish historical landmark in the heart of the downtown area. The synagogue offers daily and Shabbat services and meals and various programs and attracts young people.

The Jewish Singles Hotline is 416-635-5605.

## Pipes

*Continued from page 7*

when the Israeli government announced the completion of the security fence in one region, a resident of the West Bank border town of Qalqiliya reacted with revealing outrage: "We are living in a big prison."

These comments point to some Palestinians appreciating the benefits of elections, rule of law, minority rights, freedom of speech, and a higher standard of living. In effect, they acknowledge Israel as more civilized than the PA.

Amid all the PA's political extremism and terrorism, it is good to know that a Palestinian constituency also exists for normality.

Unfortunately, it remains a furtive constituency with no political import. The time has come for decent Palestinians to make their voices heard and state that Israel's existence is not the problem but the solution.

Mr. Pipes is director of the Middle East Forum. This article derives from a longer analysis in the current issue of the "Middle East Quarterly." ([www.DanielPipes.org](http://www.DanielPipes.org))

## Amitay

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vince American policy-makers that he provides stability. It is about time, however, that America consider the longer-term ramifications of relying on a despot who has been in power for too long, and begin to give more tangible encouragement to Egypt's nascent democratic movement.

Another recent visitor to the Jewish state was Turkey's

Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan of the ruling Islamist AK Party. On a positive note, this visit took place as another defense agreement between the two countries was concluded, this time for the purchase of Israeli UAVs. And unlike Egypt, Turkey can still lay claim to being a democracy.

But there is reason to be concerned as to Turkey's future adherence to the Kemalist principles of secularism and tolerance. Turkey today is wrestling with the problem of whether to continue to seek membership in the European Union despite chafing under the obligations joining entails. At the same time the Erdogan government has been moving to cement ties with both Damascus and Tehran, thus demonstrating its nervousness over the emergence of the Kurds as a political force in the new Iraq.

Ankara, too, has announced it wants to play a larger role in the Middle East "peace process." Like Putin, Erdogan also offered to help train and equip the PA "security forces." And like Putin, the key fact that Abbas announced he will never use force against the terrorists has been conveniently overlooked.

As long as the Palestinian leadership views terrorists as legitimate "resistance fighters" and permits them to keep their arms, providing additional weapons will not lead to peace. The same medieval philosopher who warned about not being able to distinguish between friend and foe could well have supplied the corollary that a leopard does not change its spots.

Mr. Amitay is a former executive director of AIPAC and is the founder of the pro-Israel Washington PAC ([www.washingtonpac.com](http://www.washingtonpac.com)).

## Gertel

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with a birthday greeting that he does not even take the time to worry about whether his replacement on that day will be more likable.

I must admit that the premise of the episode is clever, even

cute, so I won't give away the ending. But writer Kopelman does not leave well enough alone. The theme becomes a delight on the part of writers and producers to depict a man suggestive of a Jewish elder who mocks Jewish concerns regarding interfaith marriage. Max tells Tony, "There's an anchor lady on my weather show I like to look at. I'm not certain of her ethnicity, but she's sure easy on the eyes."

When Max does have occasion to visit Tony's show, he says: "I think the roast beef in your green room is a little off. It might have turned." When Tony's co-host responds, "Mr. Kleinman, that's actually ham," the elder says, "Well, then it was delicious." As Tony's show signs off, Max is heard saying, "I'm going to have some more of that ham."

Why not highlight a first ham-tasting experience on national TV, Kopelman seems to say, especially if one is conjuring up a Jewish codger bereft of any concern but the air times of weather forecasts?

It would seem, by the way, that Tony has long shaken Jewish restraints, for in another episode by Kopelman his reward for facing down a bully in a restaurant (during a second encounter) is his wife's fixing bacon, "Satan's candy."

Yet Tony does find it difficult to get past ancient biblical (or middle class) taboos when his wife decides to get a tattoo. Then Kopelman has Tony bring out the double guns of Yiddish: "You've got a little *shmootz* (dirt) on you."

The series is based on the life of Tony Kornheiser. I do not know how much Judaism informs and infuses life at the Kornheiser home. But in the Kleinman house, it is at best a suggestion and always in the form of a joke, often never even the punch line. While I'm not sure about the rest of the family, Tony is a Marrano with a wink.

Rabbi Gertel's book "What Jews Know About Salvation" (2002) convinced the Library of Congress that Judaism merited a subheading under "salvation." His newest book is "Over The Top Judaism: Precedents and Trends in the Depiction of Jewish Beliefs and Observances in Film and Television" (University Press

of America, Sept. 2003). It may be ordered online at a discounted price, [www.univpress.com](http://www.univpress.com).

## Cohen

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everywhere, with weapons poised. Yossel, however, finally managed to convince me that there was no one in sight; for an hour or more we lay in that pit.

Every few minutes bombs whistled overhead, followed by fearsome explosions nearby. The earth shook, but each blast pumped new hope into our hearts. Slowly we crept out of the pit and made our way to the only building still standing – the camp kitchen. There we found a few more frightened souls.

Together we discovered a sack of flour, mixed it with water, started the ovens, and baked flat breads. I noted the irony: it was Pesach Sheini – the biblical "Second Passover" – a month after the first – and we were baking matzos.

Suddenly the door flew open and a Jewish inmate came running in breathlessly, crying out, "Yidden! Fellow Jews! The Americans are here!"

We were free!  
We wanted to cry, sing, dance, but our petrified hearts would not let us. I wanted to rush outside, but my strength seemed to have left me.

When I finally did manage to move outside, I saw a long convoy of tanks and jeeps roaring through the camp. A handful of American soldiers approached the barracks. One of them, an officer, looked around him, tears streaming down his face. Only then did I fully grasp the extent of the horror around us. The barracks were nearly completely incinerated. In front of each block lay a pile of blackened, smoldering skeletons.

And we, the living, were a group of ghouls, walking corpses. Along with the American soldiers, we wept.

Among the supplies the Americans had brought with them was a bottle of wine. An inmate picked it up and announced, "For years I have not recited the Kiddush. Today I feel that I must." He then recited the words of the blessing on wine aloud.

And then he recited the "Shehecheyanu," the blessing of gratitude to God for having "kept us alive until this time."

Mr. Cohen is a Polish-born survivor of three concentration camps living in Toronto. The above is adapted from his book "Destined to Survive" (ArtScroll/Mesorah).

Editor's Note: Pesach Sheini, a month from the day before Passover, is customarily celebrated as a minor holiday; this year it falls on May 23.



## Hofmann

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one of lifelong learning, lifelong blessing, and the knowledge that I've made a contribution to the betterment of the world. Then I live my life in a state of shalom.

How does Judaism affect my life? At every level, in every respect. It's who I am.

May you, too, find shalom in your life.

Mary Hofmann welcomes comments at 198 E. 26th St., Merced, CA 95340; [mhofwriter@aol.com](mailto:mhofwriter@aol.com).

## Medad

*Continued from page 11*  
to give Shamir the message to leave. He could have easily told the world, "Ain im mi l'daber," "There's nobody to talk to. They're terrorists." The world would have understood. But he didn't; he tried to "negotiate."

Meanwhile, back in Shiloh, we dug Rachella's grave and inaugurated our cemetery. And, for the living, we established a new neighborhood, Shvut Rachel. Unfortunately Rachella isn't alone in the cemetery. She has been joined by quite a few others. Some lived full, long lives and died natural deaths. Rachella is not the only terror victim in our cemetery; we also have a "military" section.

Today we had a memorial

ceremony at the cemetery. The main speakers were sisters of some of the young dead heroes. I wasn't involved in the planning, so I can't tell you the official reason for such a program. But remember, we're in Shiloh.

It was in Shiloh, thousands of years ago, that Chana composed her prayer to G-d, the same prayer still said today. Chana prayed, beseeching G-d for a son. She didn't want the son for her own selfish reasons. She wanted a son who would serve G-d. A few years later, when Chana brought her son to Shiloh, she told Eli the Priest, "This is the son I asked for." And she left Shmuel (Samuel) with him to learn how to serve G-d.

The biblical Chana knew what her role was. She was just impatient to get going; that's why she came to Shiloh to pray. Most of us are just ordinary people; we don't know what G-d wants from us. May we learn to understand G-d's instructions and have the strength to follow them, even when they appear difficult.

Batya Medad lives in Shiloh, Israel. Her "Musings" started as "a therapeutic response to the terror that has been plaguing Israel." She welcomes comments at: [shilohmuse@yahoo.com](mailto:shilohmuse@yahoo.com); <http://shilohmusings.blogspot.com>; <http://me-ander.blogspot.com>.

## Gold

*Continued from page 12*

that this is a pleasant piece for concert but not really suitable for either seder or shul.

The next cut is a setting of "Sheyibaneit Beit Hamikdash," loosely based on the melody by Hazzan Israel Schorr. It was arranged and sung by Hazzan Hamid Dardashti. I do not believe that Hazzan Schorr would feel comfortable with this type of flamenco treatment. The quality of the voice seems both undisciplined and nasal in quality even though it is substantial. This selection, lasting for more than seven minutes, seems longer than that.

Cut No. 11, a setting of "Mi Kadonai Elolheinu," features Hazzan Danto with the Beth Abraham Youth Chorale. The

choir is under the direction of Hazzan Jerome Kopmar, with music composed by Issachar Miron. It is taken from the CD "Psalms of Israel and Hallel Oratorio."

This group was the gold standard for Jewish youth choirs, and kudos abound to all concerned. I was impressed when I heard it originally, and nothing has changed my opinion in the intervening years.

The next cut is a setting of "Eliyahu Hanavi" composed and performed by Hazzan Martin Goldstein. It is taken from the CD "Pirkei Avi." This is essentially a spirited pop type of treatment of this traditional text that, while not traditional, I felt was nevertheless very entertaining.

Cut No. 13 is a setting of "Hasal Sidur Pesah" composed by Tsemend Reim and performed by Hazzan Keith Miller. Forgive me, but, after all the superb voices one has heard on this CD, Hazzan Miller is not shown to advantage in this company. The lai, lai, lai's, while charming, really do not help all that much. Note to the committee: if something does not add to the CD, then it subtracts from it!

Cut No. 14 is a setting of the concluding phrase from the seder "L'Shanah Haba'ah Birushalayim." Composed by Shlomo Carlebach, it is performed by Hazzan Steven Stoehr and a small ensemble. This is a pleasant enough folk type of a song, and the performance is pleasing.

(You know, guys, I have a setting of this text which concludes my oratorio "Haggadah: A Search for Freedom" that you should know or, if not, surely listen to. If you were familiar with it at all, you would surely have included it on this CD.)

The next cut, a Hebrew version of "Go Down Moses," while effectively sung by Hazzan Daniel Gale, is problematic at best. There surely exist other pieces that show the music of the Conservative movement in a more creative way.

If I question the inclusion of this cut, then I really wonder why on earth this last cut, a setting of "Ki Lo Na'eh," is included. The singing by Hazzan Gaston Bogomolni is nothing more than tepid at best.

Is this breathless and barely audible type of singing the

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# Spirituality Corner

## The beauty of parenting

By RABBI SHEA HECHT

Canadian researchers conducted a study on parents



and their parenting skills. The study, which was done by observing parent and child interaction at the supermarket, discovered that parents take better care of pretty children than ugly ones.

The leader of the study asserts that there is an "evolutionary" reason for this behavior, namely, that parents feel they need to help their pretty children have the best chance to survive and reproduce.

What ludicrous findings! Exactly who did the study I don't know, but it seems certain they aren't parents. Anyone who is a parent (be it through birth, adoption, or, as the Torah explains, by being a true educator) knows that parental love is not based on logic, but is a natural response to one's offspring.

Regardless of the reality, no parent thinks that their own child is ugly. The Hebrew word for love, *ahava*, comes from the root word which means give — *hav*. When we give of ourselves to someone, in any way, we come to love them.

Regardless if children notice it or appreciate it, parents give their children endlessly from the moment they're born. That

alone fosters a love between parent and child.

According to the popular saying which is based on Talmudic thought, love is blind. Someone who loves is virtually incapable of seeing fault or ugliness in their loved one — even if the fault or ugliness is glaringly obvious to the rest of the world.

Beauty is in the eyes of the beholder, and when the beholder is a parent, every child is beautiful. I don't know any parent who isn't convinced that their children aren't beautiful — or at least prettier than average.

I came across a story of a man who killed another while fighting over a watermelon. The murder was witnessed by many people, and the murderer was caught with the knife in his hands. When his mother was told of the murder, she said, "No, it can't be. My son would never do that."

A murderer caught with a knife in his hands, witnessed by crowds of people, yet not guilty — only a mother is capable of such logic.

Is the Canadian study implying that a mother like this one is capable of seeing her child as anything but beautiful? Or any of the other mothers in a million similar, though not quite as lethal, stories?

Someone who served on the Sanhedrin, the ancient High Court in Israel, had to have children, since raising children makes one more compassionate, and, accordingly, his rulings would be tempered by mercy.

That same concept, of children making one compas-

sionate, could be extended to rabbis of today. The feelings of compassion come from parents and teachers loving and giving selflessly to their children. If my child helps me be more merciful and sympathetic to all G-d's children, how much more so will be my compassion and love to my own child or student. Certainly that love extends to viewing their children as beautiful.

With all due respect to the Canadian researchers, I suggest they use the supermarkets for shopping and leave the parent-

ing to those who have a unique bond of love with their children and students. G-d programmed parents to love all their children and see them as beautiful. Ultimately, the way parents view and care for their children is colored not by their looks, but by a very strong bond that is formed with love.

Rabbi Hecht is chairman of the board of the National Committee for the Furtherance of Jewish Education. He welcomes comments at 718-735-0223 or rabbishea@aol.com.

## Bit of Wit

### Extra guests

A Jewish couple won the lottery. They immediately set out to begin a life of luxury. They bought a magnificent mansion in Knightsbridge and surrounded themselves with all the material wealth imaginable.

Then they decided to hire a butler. They found the perfect butler through an agency, very proper and very British, and brought him back to their home. The day after his arrival, he was instructed to set up the dining room table for four, as they were inviting the Cohens to lunch. The couple then left the house to do some shopping.

When they returned, they found the table set for eight. They asked the butler why eight, when they had specifi-

cally instructed him to set the table for four?

The butler replied, "The Cohens telephoned and said they were bringing the Blintzes and the Knishes."

From the weekly essays of Rabbi Y.Y. Jacobson; to subscribe, write: YYJacobson@aol.com.

## Gold

Continued from page 15

newest fad? He sounds like a male counterpart of Nehama Carlebach to me. I hope he has a good microphone in his shul, otherwise few would be able to hear him, which in retrospect wouldn't be such a bad thing. This cut is taken from the CD "Canciones de Pesai-Passover Songs."

One realizes that the committee wanted to present as varied a compendium as possible to demonstrate the versatility and breadth of styles that exist. Nevertheless this last cut was the least effective way they could have chosen to conclude what otherwise was, for the most part, a really wonderful CD. It contains some beautiful music and superb voices for which the Conservative movement and their cantors can be justifiably proud.

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